

CHRISTIAN MONISM

By ERIC WASMANN, S.J., D.PH.

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CHRISTIAN MONISM

CHRISTIAN MONISM

MEDITATIONS ON CHRISTIAN TRUTHS

IN THE LANGUAGE OF MODERN THOUGHT

By ERIC WASMANN, S.J., D.PH.

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION, WITH AN

INTRODUCTION BY REV. SPENCER JONES

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IN MEMORY OF THE DEDICATION
OF THE WHOLE WORLD TO THE
SACRED HEART OF JESUS BY
POPE LEO XIII.

Feast of the Sacred Heart,
1899-1919.

INTRODUCTION

BY THE REV. SPENCER JONES

HAVING been asked to contribute an Introduction to this work of Father Wasmann—an honour as undeserved as it was unexpected—I may say at once that my only title to write any words of my own lies in the special interest I was led to take in the Author's famous work on *Modern Biology and the Theory of Evolution*, which appeared in 1904 (third edition in English, 1910); and also in the equally famous lectures and discussions in Berlin to which eventually that work gave rise.

Wasmann and Haeckel.—Now it was Wasmann's book chiefly which induced Haeckel to deliver his course of lectures at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall, in April, 1905, on *The Dispute regarding the Theory of Evolution*, a course which in its turn seemed to call for a careful reply on the part of Wasmann in 1907; and this reply, which, together with an account of the discussion that followed, has been translated into English under

the title of *The Problem of Evolution*, occupied four evenings, and was distributed thus:

The First Evening (February 13, 1907).—"The Doctrine of Evolution, considered as a Scientific Hypothesis and Theory" (with lantern slides).

The Second Evening.—"Theistic and Atheistic Doctrines of Evolution—Evolution and Darwinism."

The Third Evening.—"The Application to Man of the Theory of Evolution" (with lantern slides).

The Fourth Evening.—A discussion in the Great Hall of the Zoological Gardens on the subjects treated, lasting up to midnight; Wasmann's aim, in his own words, being "to elicit a practical statement of the scientific divergencies in opinion between myself and my opponents, and, if possible, to secure some approximation of our respective views."

The remarks of Professor Plate, the most distinguished of Wasmann's opponents, showed how profound the interest everywhere was in the controversy that was going forward; for after calling attention to "the enormous attendance as proving how deeply interested people are in the subject," he goes on to say, "I have often been in this hall, but I have never before seen such a sight here as I now behold. . . . Father Wasmann, of the Society of Jesus, cast a spark into the Berlin world which has grown to a mighty

flame." And what was so unusual about it was "the presence of a priest, the representative of the Church, appearing in the form of a scientist."

Now Haeckel, like Huxley, who had died twelve years before this, was, of course, one of the prophets of Darwinism, and came forward on this occasion, not only to welcome Wasmann's book as showing that the Catholic Church was prepared to discuss the theory of Evolution, but also went so far even as to single out his ninth chapter as "one that might have provided a valuable addition to one of Darwin's works"; and other distinguished scientific men in Germany also spoke highly of his attainments, Professor Lotsy going so far as to declare, in so many words, that the Jesuit Father was one of the first zoologists of his time. "Wasmann," he said, "is a Jesuit, but at the same time he is one of the best zoologists of the present day, and we must feel the deepest admiration for his investigations in the life of ants."

Where, then, did the quarrel come in, and where, precisely, was it that Wasmann and his opponents parted company? They were both of them looking at life, and both of them on the look-out for the source and origin of life; but while Wasmann said, "We must look for that source and origin outside," Haeckel and his school

were determined to look for it only within. And, more particularly, when Haeckel maintained that the theory of Evolution can dispense with belief in God, Wasmann objected: "On the contrary, that theory cannot even begin to work without him." Both looking out upon the universe saw living organisms there; but to the question as to how the first living organism came into being, the answer was, in other words, "Matter saw to that by itself, and produced it by an effort of its own—by 'spontaneous generation'"; and to the further question as to how the "matter" came, Haeckel replied, "It did not come, it was always there; matter is eternal."

Natural Science and Philosophy.—Now Wasmann, as a scientist, knew that "spontaneous generation," or the spontaneous development of the first organism from inorganic matter, had no proof to support it: efforts to establish this claim have been made, of course, repeatedly; and, without stopping to bury again the notorious *Bathybius Haeckelii*, some of us can recall an attempt on the part of Carlton Bastian, many years ago, in a controversy with Tyndall, when even Huxley had to rebuke him for putting out statements that he was not in a position to prove.

And so again, more recently, when another attempt was made with the help of radium to produce from sterilized bouillon a substance that

would show signs of life, it was proved eventually to have been a failure.

The answer to such a question, in any case, would show us, not the origin of life, but only where to lay the emphasis ; and should the proof for a chemical change of such magnitude ever be forthcoming, theology would find a place for it as for other established truths in the context of her teaching.

Meanwhile the proof is not there to-day ; and it will not do to say, with Haeckel and his school, that nevertheless, under other conditions perhaps, and at some other time, somehow and somewhere, "spontaneous generation" must have taken place, otherwise our monistic argument cannot be managed.

This aspect is considered carefully by Wasmann (*Modern Biology*, pp. 193-206 ; and in *The Problem of Evolution*).

While as to the further question, "matter" is there to start with before the scientific investigator comes upon the scene, and before his science—natural science—therefore can commence its work ; so that the question of its origin is not his question more than that of anyone else, and does not belong to his science as such, but to philosophy.

As there is, then, no scientific explanation of the origin of life, and as there cannot in the

nature of things be a scientific explanation of the origin of *matter*, what explanation has philosophy to offer? Since "matter" is shown to be finite, it could not from its very nature have existed from all eternity—a condition which is possible only to a being of infinite perfection, the personal Creator, who has the reason of his existence in himself; and out of the abundance of his own infinite perfection is able to evoke the finite out of nothingness, and this is what we call *creator*.

But Wasmann was there not merely to defend himself, but also to meet his fellow scientists on their own ground; and feeling strongly that students of natural science were being robbed of their faith under false pretences, he was determined to clear the ground and to have the matter out; and he soon found, as Mozley had found some forty years before, that a man who is an able investigator, and even a good reasoner in his own department, may disclose a want of philosophical training when he steps outside and tries to do up the sum. "Professor Huxley thinks," wrote Mozley in 1868, "the asserter of a spiritual principle or soul in man is placed in a peculiar difficulty by the discovery of protoplasm. We do not see the difficulty. We do not understand why 'a common physical basis and matter of life' with the vegetable contradicts the existence of a soul in man any more than does

a community of the same with brutes; or why protoplasm is more materialistic than flesh. Whatever be the common matter in the three orders of beings, there are characteristic differences which distinguish them; and what is common cannot account for what is different. . . . If man has what the brute has not, there is something which enters in as cause here which is not protoplasm, which *all* have. But Mr. Huxley asserts that thought is the effect of protoplasm, while at the same time protoplasm exists without thought—a position which violates the very grammar of induction, and the very first rule of that grammar—viz., that the cause of a fact must not only always precede it when it does take place, but always omit this precedence when it does not.”*

And Huxley himself came to realize, later on, this want of philosophical training in many specialists of his day, and, with Virchow in Germany, to deprecate “the arbitrariness of personal speculation which is now (1886) rampant in the several branches of physical science.” He got himself into trouble for this with his brethren, of course, but he spoke out plainly nevertheless. “Force and Matter,” he wrote, “are paraded as the alpha and omega of

* Mozley's *Essays, Historical and Theological*, vol. ii, note at bottom of p. 369.

existence. This I apprehend is the fundamental article of the faith materialistic, and whosoever does not hold it is condemned by the more zealous of the persuasion (as I have reason to know) to the inferno appointed for fools or hypocrites. But all this I heartily disbelieve. . . . It seems to me pretty plain that there is a third thing in the universe, to wit, consciousness, which in the hardness of my heart or head I cannot see to be matter or force, or any conceivable modification of either, however intimately the manifestations of the phenomena of consciousness may be connected with the phenomena known as matter and force."* Now it was "these more zealous ones" that Wasmann had before him, and this claim which he had to meet at the outset, a claim that he had no dream of allowing—namely, that the entire question of man's origin is the concern of zoology, and of zoology alone; and that it serves only to confuse the enquiry if, at any stage of it, we allow speculations as to the existence of a personal God, superior to the universe, or any other metaphysics of that kind, to intrude. The question being a simple one, belonging to zoology, the secret is, to leave it to natural science, and not to meddle. Now Wasmann's answer to this is, that where it is

* T. H. Huxley, *Fortnightly Review*, New Series, vol. 40, "Science and Morals," 1886.

a question of man's body only, it is, of course, a simple one; and natural science, knowing where to place him, describes him rightly as belonging to the class of mammals, and as the highest representative of that class. From time to time, too, in the course of its investigations on this plane, it proposes theories of evolution as more or less probable explanations of the derivation of organic species. But the question of man's body as a whole is not simple, but complex; not one of pure zoology alone, but mixed in its character, and a question with the solution of which revelation and natural science are both concerned. For zoology, then, to claim a monopoly of the entire question was to mistake a part for the whole and to ignore that other and higher part of man, and that question as to the nature and origin of the spiritual life in man, which, as belonging to another plane, lies beyond the scope of that science, and upon which zoology, therefore, is not competent to pronounce. And we must look elsewhere at this stage to philosophy, and more particularly to psychology, to help us.

A Jesuit and a Theologian.—Now although his opponents could not shunt Wasmann as they had tried to shunt Mozley, on the ground that he was not a trained scientific investigator, there was one thing they could say of him—he was a theologian

and a Jesuit ; and so they proceeded to invest him, whether he would or no, with two personalities—a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in one. And when he declared that “among plants and animals there is a good deal of evidence in support of Evolution,” they said at once, “There we have Wasmann the scientist”; whereas if he went on to say, “I think we must reject the theory that man on his spiritual side can have been evolved from brutes,” they interposed at once, “There we have Wasmann the Jesuit.”

But apart from the unreality of that hypothetical “indifferent person,” who, whether on the side of religion or of science, is assumed to have no bias of his own, and upon whom in the plane of history Mr. Chesterton has been pouring recently his not altogether undeserved scorn, the prejudice happens to be beside the mark in the case of the Jesuits, with whom we may generally be sure of one condition, namely, that of trained thinkers with an evident desire to be fair to those who do not think with them. “As a person acquainted with some Jesuits,” wrote Mr. Andrew Lang, “one may say that one would just as soon distrust soldiers, or barristers, or squires, *en bloc*, as distrust Jesuits. If ever one has met sportsman-like fairness in the discussion of historical points which excite partisanship it is among the members of the Society of Jesus”—an impression which, I

may be allowed to say, I fully share after twenty years' experience of my own; and a condition which I think it is easy to recognize in the writings of Father Wasmann.

Monism.—Now with this impatience of dualism, and the determination to look for the origin of life only within, Wasmann's opponents came to fall gradually under the fascination of Monism, according to which there must be only one law in the universe, and only one substance, of which "matter" and "spirit" are but different manifestations; and God comes to be identified with his own world.

Haeckel, indeed, whose *History of Creation* (*Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte*), sold cheaply on the railway bookstalls, and whose *Riddle of the Universe* (*Welträtsel*), had later on done untold mischief in England, as well as in Germany, in a passionate effort to push this position, and to establish the descent of man, body and soul, from the brutes, was betrayed into falsifying more than once the illustrations in his embryological statements, for which Rüttimeyer, His, Semper, and many other of his own brethren felt it right to denounce him as dishonest, and to rebuke him openly. But with Monism itself Wasmann was direct and unceremonious, scratching off the paint, and exposing the pantheism and practical atheism that really lay beneath. "We

need not ask," he said, "how much is left of God, when we have subtracted the 'world' from him, as if we were working a sum in algebra. Obviously the remainder, the actual being of God, is nothing. In this way Monism turns out to be mere Atheism, when we examine it closely." And under such conditions those who desire to have religion must be content with what is developed for them out of mere animal origins.

In this way Science might come, not merely to dictate to us what she has ascertained in her own department, but to dole out to us our doctrines. "The doctrine of original sin," it might be urged, "will not hold with evolution, and much of the talk we hear of 'repentance' must go with it; miracles, again, do not happen, as you also would know had you studied nature as we have—laws of nature are real laws, and will brook no interference from without; and what used to be termed 'the supernatural' must, of course, go with the rest; although you may like to retain a belief in a directive force of some kind."

Now observe how Wasmann meets this—a model of the way, I think, in which it should be met. As a scientist himself he knows, of course, how to appreciate the laws of nature, but he will not make a god of them, nor will he allow himself to forget that they are made by God; he knows, too, that these laws of nature are general laws,

and that no one in the world has any authority to pronounce them "necessary."

"God willed," he writes, "that the natural order should exist, and he does not arbitrarily interfere with its working, because to do so would be incompatible with his infinite wisdom, which is identical with his power. Therefore in the natural order there are no miracles, or exceptions to the natural laws. But over and above the natural order God has given a supernatural order to those of his creatures who are endowed with reason, and he has done this through the Christian revelation. Miracles occur only to further the aims of this supernatural order." In other words, knowing from his own experience that a scientist, as certainly as a theologian, is apt to blunder when he steps beyond his proper boundary, Wasmann goes straight to the point, and after recognizing what is true of the natural order, puts the investigator back into his right place; and the confused condition of mind which is apt to picture every approach from outside its own department as "arbitrary" and "interfering" is here corrected and confronted by a careful statement of sound theology which, by lifting the entire question on to a higher plane, brings both the natural and the supernatural order into line with the reason of God.

For the rest, questions of sin and of the soul

belong to the spiritual side of man, and we do not go to natural science for answers to them, but to another teacher elsewhere.

To this careful distinction of departments, each one with a business of its own, and each minding its own business, Wasmann looks as one chief means of clearing the issue; and so strongly did Cardinal Newman feel this that in recalling, in his old age, the impression on his mind of the first meeting of the British Association, he said he deprecated the references of some of the speakers to the being of God, and to the proof of his existence that we find in his works, on the ground that such references were not what they were there for; and that if under those conditions they began by proclaiming their belief in God, it was not unlikely that, later on, they would end by denying him—a prophecy that was only too exactly fulfilled some thirty years later.

And so with Wasmann. "Natural science," he writes, "can tell us nothing of the source of life on our planet . . . and what biology actually knows is nothing but an uninterrupted series of living beings, living cells, living nuclei, which find a truthful expression in the fourfold law: 'Omne vivum ex vivo; omnis cellula ex cellula; omnis nucleus ex nucleo; omnis chromosoma ex chromosomate.'"

And on the same ground, although he was still

in the grip of an agnostic habit, which was probably but a phase of the earlier course of the movement, Huxley wrote only nine years before his death: "If the belief in a God is essential to morality, physical science offers no obstacle thereto; if the belief in immortality is essential to morality, physical science has no more to say against the probability of that doctrine than the most ordinary experience has, and it effectually closes the mouths of those who pretend to refute it by objections deduced from merely physical data."*

Certainly, but that is not the end of the matter, but the end only so far as natural science itself can speak; and viewing the same phenomena from the higher and wider standpoint of philosophy, and even before we come to theology itself, Wasmann tells us what he sees: "In man the one soul is capable of all the activities which a beast can exercise, but in addition it raises itself to the higher functions of the will and intellect, and thus it towers above the sphere of animal life. It is because of this essential superiority of man, in respect of his spiritual activity, to what is animal and material, that we are forced to assume the existence of a simple and spiritual soul in man. . . ."

Wasmann does not agree with Driesch in

* T. H. Huxley, *Science and Morals*, loc. cit.

simply deriding and repudiating Darwin's particular theory of evolution, but assigns to natural selection quite a subordinate place ; looks to the interior causes as the chief factors of evolution ; dismisses, of course, the wild notion of mere chance as accounting for organic species ; and would agree with Mozley in insisting that under any view of nature " design adheres to facts." He would agree with him also in maintaining that " natural selection only weeds and does not plant " ; " it is the drain of nature carrying off the irregularities, the monstrosities, the abortions ; it comes in after and not upon the active developments of nature to prune and thin them, but it does not create a species, it does not possess one productive or generative function " — words almost identical with those of Hugo de Vries, quoted by Wasmann : " Natural selection is a sieve ; it sifts out but produces nothing, although it is often wrongly asserted to do so. The theory of selection ought not to take into account the origin of ' what it eliminates. ' " While on the question of evolution as such, Wasmann is emphatic : " The scientific theory of evolution is in itself absolutely unconcerned with any theory of the universe."

In spite, however, of his criticism of Monism, as Haeckel and his school defined it, he does not, of course, forget that the student should aim, as far

as possible, at a uniform and simple explanation of nature ; and in that sense even St Thomas Aquinas and St Augustine were "downright Monists" ; and in that sense he would speak and treat of "Christian Monism."

Finally, what I have written here may serve, I hope, to introduce Father Wasmann, not to the few in England who know him already, but to the general multitude of readers who know him not as yet. It is a grand work to which he has put his hand and bent all the splendid energies of his heart and mind. Conscious of the waste that comes of our divisions, whether in religion or in science, he seeks to ascertain and to lay down for us lines on which men may come ultimately to live and to work together ; and, not to mention the multitude of his literary productions over a long past of forty years, those who turn to such a work as his treatise on *Modern Biology* will recognize in it a monument of research, of nervous and accurate thinking, and of an earnestness and profound conviction that is evident in every line ; while of this present little work on *Christian Monism* I prefer to repeat the author's own description in words not intended originally to appear in print, to the effect that "whereas all his scientific works he had written with his head, this one on *Christian Monism* he had written with his heart's blood."

NOTE.—The works of Father Wasmann that have been translated into English are the following :

Modern Biology and the Theory of Evolution. Kegan Paul, Trench. Price 21s.

The Problem of Evolution. Kegan Paul. Price 6s.

Psychology of Ants and of Higher Animals. London and Edinburgh.

Instinct and Intelligence in the Animal Kingdom. St Louis.

The majority of the author's works have not been translated, and more than a hundred lectures on the subject of Science and Religion, with special reference to the theory of Evolution, were delivered to students in the universities of Germany, Austria, Holland, and Switzerland in the years 1901 to 1921.

In his special branch of science—Entomology—Father Wasmann's name is known by some 250 contributions towards our knowledge of the guests of ants and of termites (1886-1923).

And among the numerous Entomological Societies that elected him honorary fellow is included that of London (1912). For his work in Natural Philosophy he was made Doctor of Philosophy, *honoris causa*, by the University of Freiburg in Switzerland (1921). In these studies he goes profoundly into the problems of evolution and of animal psychology.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IT is modern Monism's proud boast for the Christian conception of an "extramundane or personal God" to have substituted that of an "intramundane or immanent God," who fills the All with the divine presence, and raises man to true fellowship with himself, nay, even to mystic deification. On closer testing of these fair promises, it becomes apparent that, by means of a revaluation of ideas, they are offering us Dutch metal for the good old gold sterling of the Christian idea of God. Their basic principle—God's substantial unity and identity with the world—is philosophically untenable and self-contradictory; and it destroys the concept of God as the absolute, infinitely perfect Being. From what Monists call God, take away the sum total of things individual called "world," and there is left a mere nothing to constitute the content of their idea of God. Those fair words utilized by Monists to cloak the inner hollowness of their conception of the Deity, they have tacitly borrowed from the natural theology of Christians. God's immensity and his omni-

presence in all creatures, God's action in all created activities, through his divine *concursus*—these are but old truths of the Christian Faith. Thanks to Christian revelation concerning the Incarnation, as also concerning the elevation to Sonship of mankind ransomed by Christ, our true kinship with God and our true likeness to him have been fully revealed to us. To us these privileges are imparted by sanctifying grace, which, as we are taught, is "a participation of the divine nature." Daily at Mass the Church reminds us that in the celebration of the holy Mysteries "we are to share in the Godhead of him who deigned to share our manhood."

Would that all devout believers might gain deeper insight into the precious content of these Christian mysteries, in order thence to draw fresh nourishment for their godlike and supernatural life! Would that the whole splendour of the Christian idea of God, with its connotation of immanence and likeness, were triumphantly grasped by all educated Catholics whom monistic catchwords flatter and allure! Since the great world-war the monistic conception of the world is beginning on all sides to revive its anti-Christian propaganda. All the more necessary does it become for us to arm ourselves against it by a deeper understanding of our holy faith. And this is the object of the considerations

here presented, dating from 1912. They are not written in the philosophical or theological language of the schools, these lofty old truths we have clothed in modern garb. It is the author's heartfelt and innermost wish that the beautiful motto which adorns the ancient coat-of-arms of Oxford University, and which was on the festive badge of the members of the Second International Entomological Congress, "*Dominus illuminatio mea*," should also become a reality to modern naturalists. May God shed the light of his grace on those souls who are the witnesses of his grandeur in nature! It is the age-long Christian Monism, the only true monistic teaching, based on reason and revelation, that I would fain here present to my readers in a series of pictures, from the omnipresence of God to participation in the divine Nature. To him, the infinite eternal God, from whom is all, through whom is all, in whom is all, to him be praise and honour for ever!

"*Ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in
quo omnia, ipsi gloria in sæcula !*"

THE AUTHOR.

Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1919.

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CHRISTIAN MONISM

CHAPTER I

TWO LITTLE FISHES AND THE OCEAN

“For in him we live and move and have our being.”—
ACTS XVII 28.

SWIMMING about in the same ocean, thousands of miles apart, are two little fishes. They are in the ocean, and the ocean is in them; they feel in the ocean, and the ocean feels in them; they think in the ocean, and the ocean thinks in them. These are no common little fishes, but beings endowed with reason. And the ocean, by which they are surrounded and compenetrated, has given being to both these little fishes. No common ocean is this ocean, but the infinite absolute ocean, compassing the entire cosmos, filling up the entire cosmos. And it is not infinite only in space, but it is the infinite fullness of being and of life, of knowledge and of love. And it is moreover one single infinite eternal act of being and of life, of knowledge and

of love. And this act is absolutely identical with the ocean's being, and hence also identical with the whole infinite force of its activity everywhere, wherever the ocean exists.

Consequently also it is in both the little fishes, which, separated by thousands of miles, are swimming about in that ocean. Hence also, if it pleases the ocean, the one little fish can know what the other is feeling and thinking and willing. In mind one can be infinitely near to the other; for the ocean which compasses and altogether compenetrates both is of course all-knowing and almighty and all-good: it is—God!

“In him we live and move and have our being.”

There we have also the perfectly simple reply to the apparently difficult question: why and how the blessed Mother of God and the Saints in “heaven” are able to know when, here below on earth, we are praying to them, and beseeching them to be our intercessors at the throne of God, and our helpers in our needs whether of body or soul. Herein lies that mysterious concatenation wrought by our truly wonderful Communion of Saints. In it we profess belief as often as we recite the Apostles' Creed. Now, to render available the action of this communion of souls—all raised to the supernatural life—there is no

need for God's angel "to flit to and fro," from our atom here in world-space, commonly called earth, to some astronomically unknown place beyond the stars, called heaven, and thence to flit back hither in order to bring us back the heavenly message. For between heaven and earth "telegraphic wireless of a higher order" already exists, installed by the infinite ocean of the Godhead: through the medium of the divine essence, which, by one single eternal act of knowing and willing, is everywhere present, and, thanks to its omnipotence, may allow its creatures to share this knowledge, in so far as created beings are capable of assimilating it.

According to the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas and other great theologians, the blessed in heaven behold in the divine essence all created things having reference to themselves. In this way they also take cognizance of our prayers to them. As a mark of special favour (a gratis given grace) God can impart to the just, already in this life, some anticipation of otherworld-knowledge, at least for particular cases, by manifesting to them the wants of other persons needing their intercession. Of this the lives of the Saints furnish us with more than one instance.

The inner consciousness that God's infinity, with all his love and providential care, is present

in all his creatures, living and working in them, serves further to enhance our trustful confidence in our own prayers for all such as are united by the bond of divine filiation, or destined to partake thereof.

CHAPTER II

ANGELS, MESSENGERS OF HEAVEN

“The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.”—*From the Angelus.*

THE *Holy Angels* are not thereby excluded from our intercourse with God and his Saints. On the contrary, they themselves belong to the class of “little fishes” in one and the same ocean of Godhead. They constitute a right glorious branch as members of the Communion of Saints. They are the golden chain that binds together the energies of “heaven and earth.”

We know from our Catholic Faith that there are holy angels: pure spirits, created by God like our own material world; and, after undergoing trial—in which, alas! some fell through pride—raised to the supernatural state of glory. Whole hierarchies of wisdom and might and of super-mundane beauty!

We know further that the angels “do always behold the face of the Father who is in heaven” (Matt. xviii 10); and that they are also our angel-guardians. Thus they are not idle spectators of

the work of mankind's salvation ; on the contrary, they take a highly active interest in us. Our faith further teaches that more than once, for the furtherance of man's salvation, the Almighty employed angels as visible bright-robed messengers. This is why we speak of them as angels, that is messengers (*angeli*). Message most blest of all was brought by the archangel Gabriel, when he announced to the blessed Virgin the incarnation of the divine Word and her own divine motherhood : " Hail, full of grace ! the Lord is with thee " (Luke i 28).

The holy angels are indeed God's messengers to mankind ; they are also mankind's messengers to God. As is so beautifully stated in Holy Writ, they " bear the prayers of the just before the throne of God " (Job xii 12).

And from the golden censer, which the archangel " swings before God's throne," our prayers and sacrifices ascend like sweet incense " before the throne of divine Majesty " (Apoc. viii 3).

We have been speaking here in language which is but the human mode of expressing those supernatural relations that link us with the world of pure spirits. Even our school children are nowadays aware that angels have no wings, howbeit our imagination may still equip them with those aërial organs of locomotion. It is sheer artistic symbolism. And this applies

also to the use to which angels put their wings. The pinions of pure spirits are understanding and will. Being little fishes in the ocean of God-head, in order to fly "from heaven to earth below," or "from earth to heaven above," all they need is to actuate their spiritual forces in the direction to which God's goodness points. "To carry" our prayers "before the throne of God" they have only to give them their spiritual adhesion, while seconding the same by their powerful intercession.

That angels are not omnipresent, but are somewhere, is self-evident; yet they are "somewhere" in quite a different fashion to that of things corporeal. Angels, as theologians remind us, may occupy space, though, being incorporeal, they cannot fill it. On the extent of their occupation of space there is no unanimity. Room occupied by an angel must at any rate be understood only of the spatial extent of its field of force, not of the extent of its corporeal sphere of localization, inasmuch as an angel has no body.

If angels may occupy a place in space, they can also change their place in world-space, and they can "flit across" immeasurable distances with the rapidity of thought. They have no need of local movement in our sense of that word, in order to carry hither and thither their divine

messages. Their sole requisite is simply spiritual action at a distance, intensive actuation of intellect and will, that knows not of spatial farness.

For, as regards this force-movement, velocity and acceleration cannot be expressed by mechanical laws of motion, in the letters f and v ; since m , which represents mass, is missing in this energy-formula.

CHAPTER III

MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE REALM OF SPIRIT

“With the progress of modern technical science distances have vanished ; space and time have been victoriously overcome.”

IN the realm of spirit, reckoning is made only of *intensities*, no longer of *distances*. Foreign to it, therefore, is the notion of local motion, in so far as this denotes the local change of position of two bodies relatively to each other. Instead of the *material energies* that underlie all work-production in our material world, and create for our senses what we call extension, there appear on the scene *spiritual energies*, that are independent of space and that produce magnitudes of quite a different kind to what our eyes can see. In the domain of mind, “greatest” is the one who combines the most comprehensive intelligence with the strongest will. And quite appropriately, in the realm of *supernature*, of grace, and of glory, he is greatest who hath “*greatest knowledge and love of God*.”

And already here on earth the same holds

good, to some little extent, of God's spiritual kingdom among us. Here, too, is greatest, who with greatest love combines greatest humility. With knowledge of God here below one is poorly provided; it is only knowledge "as in a mirror," in a riddle, as St Paul declares (1 Cor. xiii 12). It is now only *faith*, an imperfect knowledge, not yet *vision*. Yet this weak glimmer of God's light here below suffices for hope and for love, and, above all, for love in suffering, a lofty privilege held by us worms of earth over the blessed spirits that are incapable of suffering. As smouldering fire, concealed beneath a coal-heap in a narrow coal-house, suddenly gleams and bursts into bright flame if the walls give way and a powerful air-current runs in, even so shall be the outburst of our love for God when our mortal shell breaks asunder and the breeze of eternity is wafted on our soul.

Let us now go back to both our little fishes in the cosmic ocean. Our hypothesis was that these two are swimming about in yonder ocean, a thousand miles apart. But that estimate was merely an hypothesis. In reality, perhaps, they are only one hundred miles apart; perhaps only ten, possibly only one; nay, maybe they are beside each other in immediate proximity. It is all one for their spiritual intercourse in the vast world-ocean of Godhead. For "yonder" the

means of intercourse of the spirit-realm are alone available; spatial distance has there become a negligible quantity. .

It is our boast that in human intercourse on this earth, thanks to the progress of modern technical appliances that have harnessed to our service steam, light, electricity, and the whole atmosphere, distances on earth have vanished. By means of wireless telegraphy, already across a distance of 15,000 kilometres, we can make a verbal agreement from Nauen, near Berlin, to Hawaii;* and to further development of this international and intercontinental means of communication no limits are set. Neither land, nor sea, nor atmosphere can offer any insurmountable obstacle to mutual oral understanding between modern minds—to an understanding that flits across unmeasured spaces with the rapidity of lightning.

Now if the material energies of the world of matter, when placed at the service of our mental energies, banish, as it were, the very notion of distance, and exclude it from the mutual intercourse of souls still in bondage of the body, in how much higher degree does this hold good of that purely spiritual intercourse that needs for

* The linear distance amounts to 14,490 kilometres. On November 29, 1915, a wireless message from Nauen was read in Hawaii.

intermediaries no material energies whatever! Instead of the ether or other medium that fills cosmic space with its fineness of inconceivable tenuity, and which is assumed to be the carrier of energy transmitted into nunciatory vibrations, whether of light, or electricity, or aught else—instead of this medium there looms before us *union with God*, with the infinite Ocean of Absolute Perfection, in which we little fishes live and move and have our being. And the more intimately we allow ourselves to be penetrated by this sea, the more swiftly, too, fall away all earthly limitations of our intercourse within the “Communion of Saints.” Thus, for instance, any one of our dear kinsfolk who, while here on earth, lived in close union with God, and who was especially dear to us, may, even after death, when withdrawn from our sight, yet be and remain spiritually near us, without our needing to indulge overmuch in the reflection as to where exactly the disembodied spirit—the soul, that is, released from the body—dwells in space. It is “with God”; that for us is sufficient to find it out, in spiritual converse, if so it please God.

We can afford to pity from our heart Spiritists, Occultists, and Theosophists, when through the swindle of spiritistic séances they would fain summon to themselves spirits of the departed who were dear to them in this life. In much

more simple, and, indeed, more real fashion, does this come about amongst us: for "in him we live and move and have our being."

The corporeal world exists both in space and in time. Its activities consist in local motion of the tiniest as well as of the greatest masses, in the smallest or largest space. The world of pure spirits, as also men's souls separated after death from their bodies, are essentially independent of space as well as of local motion. That they are still living in time is due to the succession inherent in their activities of knowing and willing. Midway betwixt the corporeal and spirit worlds stands our human soul, united in one substance to a material body. This soul must draw its subject-matter, or raw material, so to speak, of its spiritual activity from sense-action depending on the body and its organs, to transmit and subject it to further spiritual operations. Again, in executing its will-impulses, and in communicating spiritual ideas, it is tethered to material energies in the matter of its intercourse appliances. For these reasons, accordingly, the soul lives still in dependence, not only of time, but of space also. It dwells in a body which it animates, and, moreover, in order to bring its understanding and will into effective relation with the outer world, it is dependent on the material nerve-processes of the organism. But the higher man's

spiritual activity soars in the domain of the supernatural—each act of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity is of course already a supernatural act, and that in an eminent degree—the more this poor little fish allows itself to be permeated by the infinite ocean of Godhead, the more intimately also and the more immediately and independently of the shackles of distance can it hold converse, by knowledge and love, with the other little fishes who are also swimming about in the same sea. Borne on by supernatural knowledge and love, the weak human soul can develop the most sublime spiritual energies. And herein it lives a life of the highest order, surpassing all “monistic energy,” in the same measure as God becomes the soul’s “*one and all*.” Lastly, in the glorified state in heaven, the spiritual energy of the creature is elevated to highest superiority because of its perfect immersion in the ocean of Godhead through the beatific vision.

God alone is *infinite* and *eternal*. For him, the Absolute, there exists neither space nor time, mere relative entities inherent in the corporeal and changeable. *He* is the infinite *here* and the everlasting *now*. To become perfectly united with this God through the beatific vision of his triune essence, that is what we call happiness everlasting or blissful eternity. There indeed not

only earthly space has ceased for us, but earthly time also. We continue, nevertheless, to co-exist with space and time, but only as long as there be body in the cosmos and succession persisting in our spiritual and bodily activities of our glorified state. But then already the day has dawned for us that knows no evening, the day of God's blissful eternity in "heaven." Where that heaven is we shall see later.

CHAPTER IV

THE STROKE OF THE COSMOS-CLOCK IN TIME AND IN ETERNITY

"Like ants disturbed we hustle and rush along every road to *happiness* except just the *only one*; for this has a cross for sign-post."—W. KREITEN, S.J.

BEFORE me I see a seething ant-hillock. A picture of our world here below, with its rush and bustle and hunt after *happiness*. Here is journeying home in triumph one of these emmets carrying a fir needle-leaf; there another with a bit of dry stick; and there again another with the leg of a dead beetle. And whichever one trails along with heaviest burden fancies itself happiest, and proudly terms his deed an achievement towards the progress of civilization for the well-being of the ant community. Thereupon a higher vertebrate comes along, and with one kick knocks over the whole Babel-tower of ant felicity, turning it into a scene of confusion and wreckage. "What a disaster!" the little ants piteously murmur. And they neither stop nor rest in their hunt for happiness until, on the morrow or the day after, they have

rebuilt their ant-hill. And they do not see the man who looks on smiling. And they hear not as he calls aloud to them : vanity of vanities, and all is vanity !

We little ant-mannikins live here below on earth still fettered by space and time ; yet, borne on the wings of spirit, we may raise ourselves above both, hence also above the vanities of earthly existence.

We have seen how, because of God's infinity, spatial distances may be eliminated in our intercourse not only with God, but also with those exalted spirits we call angels and saints. We have seen how this elimination is the foundation of a spiritual intercourse in the "Communion of Saints," to which also the just on earth belong, and for which all such as desire it are candidates. And this spiritual world of intercommunication is equipped with the "most modern" spiritual means of intercourse, whereby all celestial and terrestrial distances are reduced to zero. Now what is here said of space-distances is likewise applicable to time-distances.

In the supernatural realm of spirit it is possible also to eliminate those periods of time whereby the various and multitudinous burgesses of yonder higher world are, in the course of world-history, separated one from another by time. And the effacement of this separation is

but the effect of God's infinity and eternal omniscience. For to this omniscience all that is knowable, together with its definite determinations in time, is ever present in one single, simple act.

When here on earth in the Church Catholic is kept the feast of any Saint who lived a thousand years before, and whose bodily substance, apart perchance from some bone relics, has long since been dissipated into millions of dust particles, called atoms, which to-day continue to exist in other beings, or else as inorganic elements and combinations, it is none the less within our power, even to-day, to enter into living spiritual converse with that Saint; and it is possible to hold converse not only with his soul "dwelling in heaven with God"—though not till the last day, at the resurrection, will that soul be reunited to its body fashioned of glorified earth-dust—but also with that very Saint himself, exactly as he was in his own day, his identical self.

For this the connecting link is furnished by our natural spiritual capacities. From out the tomb of the distant past memory evokes for us the life story of the deceased. Imagination presents him alive before the mind's eye. Intellect ponders his virtuous and edifying life. Will lastly renders thanks to him in requital for all he

accomplished and endured in those bygone days out of love for our divine Saviour; yea, and it purposes to follow in his footsteps.

But by union with God our supernatural spiritual activity can rise still higher, even to *immediate intercourse*, so to speak, with that same Saint who lived a thousand years ago, and whose feast we celebrate to-day.

Lo! here on earth in our midst there once also lived "the Saint of Saints" in human form as truly man: the *God-man, Jesus Christ!* It was of him the Apostle of the Gentiles wrote: "He loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. ii 20). And so, too, every human soul redeemed by Christ's blood can, ought, and must with Paul exclaim: "He loved *me* and gave himself up for *me*." For what took place in Palestine, well-nigh two thousand years ago, that very event closely concerned us all, and immeasurably so. That event took place *for us*, for each one of *us*.

He who, in the thirtieth year of his nativity, suffered for us on the cross in Jerusalem, and died at the time when Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea—this same Saviour, at that very time, was thinking of *us*. Already, then, he was aware of our present-day supplications to him, of our present love for him, even as we are lovingly offering them to him 1,900

years later in requital for his bitter death on the cross.

And *to-day* he knows of it just as well as then. To the divine nature of the God-man, Jesus Christ, there is neither yesterday, nor to-day, nor to-morrow; to it all is but a moment—"eternity." The most hallowed soul of Christ, which, through the personal union of his human nature with the divine Word, was infinitely exalted, still of itself, is and remains finite, being of the order of creatures even in respect of intellect and will. Nevertheless, as soul of the divine Word, it participates spiritually in the whole work of man's salvation, even as, thanks to the infinite love of the divine Word, as soul of the Lamb slain on our behalf, it also participates therein, and that in the most active and efficacious manner conceivable. Through the beatific vision of the divine Essence, the soul of Christ has full spiritual partnership in all that lives and exists in God and through God. Above all, this participation extends to us brothers and sisters on earth of Christ. Verily it was for us "the Word was made flesh." Nor can the glorified Son of man, in heaven above, forget the marks of those five wounds he received for us well-nigh two thousand years ago on Golgotha, wounds which to this day he retains in his glorified body. Never can he forget the deep, broad wound in

his Saviour's heart, into which the cruel lance was driven through his side after his death on the cross, to draw off the last drop of his precious blood for our salvation.

Can *we* perhaps forget it? When to-day, in meditation on Christ's bitter passion, we become spiritually absorbed in recalling his death on the cross; when we gaze in spirit on the drama of blood that was enacted 1,900 years ago on Calvary, then even for *us* this drama is no longer remote in time. In truth it is as though the scene was being enacted before our eyes, and as though we were calling out to our crucified Saviour: "Thou didst love me and thou gavest thyself up for *me*. What shall I give thee in return? All that I am, all that I have!"

Yes, thus through God's eternal omniscience our suffering and dying Redeemer is brought infinitely near to us. He becomes spiritually present to us. The nineteen centuries are absorbed in the ocean of eternity, and we are absorbed in spirit in him; there we find ourselves close by him. We look upon the Lamb, the innocent, blood-bespattered victim, hanging here for our sins on the cross. We gaze into the eyes growing dim; we receive the last blood-drop that falls from the Saviour's heart; we implore his grace and mercy, and consecrate to him all our heart's love. Aye, and he hears us

and he accepts our sighs, *as he heard and accepted them at the very time when*, well-nigh two thousand years ago, he was hanging for our sake on the cross, and in his human soul foresaw our supplications of to-day.

Such is the triumphant victory over time of our Christian faith, of Christian hope, and of Christian charity. Time's cosmic-clock may at this moment be striking the third hour afternoon on the very day of Christ's world-ransoming death on the cross, or it may be striking the third hour of the morning 1,900 years later: these six strokes ring out in unison with the single stroke of eternity's everlasting *one*.

To-day in "yonder heaven" Christ's sacred humanity sits enthroned at the right hand of the Father. The same sacred humanity, yea, the same glorified sacred humanity, sits also enthroned hidden beneath the Eucharistic species "in this heaven" in the tabernacle, on the countless altars of the Catholic Church. Here no more pain can reach his divine heart; pain of others it can only assuage. For this divine heart is immersed in the ocean of divine bliss of the eternal Word. And yet we who love him can still, even to-day, bring "consolation" to his divine heart in the sacrament of his love. By our love we can offer *atonement* or make *amends* for the world's ingratitude. Here is the strongest

motive underlying so many heroic lives of sacrifice of Christ-loving souls in every century and every decade of our Christian era down to our own time. This same atoning love is the root-thought of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, now solemnly approved by the Catholic Church.

But, it will be said, this pious impulse, even to-day, to offer consolation to the heart of the Saviour, even to-day to make amends for the world's ingratitude, surely this craving stands out in glaring theological contradiction with the impassibility of Christ's glorified manhood? Over the risen Christ, as St Paul has solemnly declared (Rom. vi 9), "death hath no more dominion"; and neither hath pain or suffering, which pertain to the realm of death. For his divine heart there is no more trouble or care, but only an immeasurable divine sea of bliss.

None the less, this impassibility of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus is by no means incompatible with our capability of offering to it even to-day the consolation of our love. The brief span of time intervening between our Lord's sacred passion on that first Good Friday and his present-day glorification is lost in God's eternity. There both these points in time are *one* moment. Furthermore, on that passion-day our Saviour's human soul already saw in advance the

whole work of our salvation even unto the end of time. Through the omniscience of the divine Word it was made present to his soul's gaze ; and it is so present even to-day.

Thus it comes to pass that even now, on this very day, we may afford consolation to the heart of our blessed Redeemer, by our present love towards him ; yea, still more by our present zeal, manifested in leading to the knowledge and love of him those souls for whom he died. How do we perform this task ? Or rather how is he performing it with us ?

It came about on a horribly dark night on the Mount of Olives some 1,900 years ago. There, of his own free will, our Redeemer, out of love for us, opened all the sluices of time, so that in one single hour all the waves of suffering surged, streamed in, and burst upon his Sacred Heart. God's omniscience and God's eternity unrolled before the most hallowed soul of Christ the whole history of man's salvation, fashioning thereof an actually present picture full of overwhelming tragedy and truth.

And in this world-tragedy the rôle of hero was played by himself, at once innocent victim and incarnate God. From the first act, the fall in Paradise, to the last act of the general judgement, there appeared before him all mankind in active participation ; all poor sinners, with all their sins

for which he was to suffer and die, stood out there against him and bound and mocked him and scourged him to blood and crowned him with a crown of thorns, and nailed him to the cross; all—even we—were there present with *our* weight of sin! There the divine Heart of Jesus, amid torture unspeakable, willed to taste from first to last all the ingratitude of the whole sinful race, till that heart became contracted and convulsed for terror, loathing, and sorrow; and till the blood, as if in the sweat of death, oozed out from all the pores of the body. That was Christ's agony on Mount Olivet for us and through us.

But then there came the angel of God, sent by the Father, to minister consolation. And what does he show him? He pointed out how, participating in the bloody drama of his bitter passion, there are not only his tormentors and enemies, but others also, countless others, friends and lovers, and those happily redeemed by him. There, too, he saw *our* repentance for sin, all *our* love for him, whereby we manifest our gratitude for his bitter passion. There before his very eyes, we were transformed from executioners to compassionate onlookers. And it was this that ministered consolation to the adorable Heart of Jesus on the Mount of Olives. And this consolation we can offer to his Sacred Heart even to-day. For what-

ever we are doing and shall do, that he then saw actually present, through God's omniscience and eternity, even as it is actually present to him to-day. And thus on me depends whether, by my perfidy, I shall add to my Saviour's agony, or whether, by my loyalty, I shall comfort him in his agony. On me this depends, even at this very instant . . . what, then, shall be my choice ?

* * * * *

As God is the boundless "Here," so he is also the eternal "Now," without beginning and without end. We find the exact opposite in our partial and created existence. It is neither in the past nor in the future, barely hovering on the fine razor-like line between both. "Then" it *was*; "later" it *will be*; "now" it indeed *is*, but merely in the wretched momentary twinkling of an eye—the ever-rolling moment (*nunc fluens*) that knows no rest.

On the contrary, God is *eternal*. In him you have neither "was" nor "will be," but only "is." *I am who I am*—*Ego sum qui sum*, Ἐγὼ εἰμὶ ὁ ὢν (Exod. iii 14). God is eternal "being," an eternal "I am," for he alone is *the eternal, the unchangeable*.

When the cosmic-clock has struck its last twelve, then begins for us the *one* of eternity. Then for us also there is still a past and a future; yet we no longer live by time-measurement; for

then we become wholly immersed in the eternal *now* of eternity divine. The cosmic-clock ceases to strike, once the twelve of the last judgement has thundered forth.

As, through the beatific vision of God in "yonder heaven," we become wholly immersed in God's immensity, so too shall we be plunged and wholly sunk in God's eternity. Do we, then, share this eternity? Yea, but it is only—if one may thus express it in our imperfect human speech—a share in its second half. Its first half, that we describe as without beginning, is not for any creature. But its second half—that we call unending—is shared by immortal spirits and by our immortal human soul.

How, on a calm night, as we look up at the stars, our wonder is aroused by the spatial immensities, which astronomers with telescope and spectroscope endeavour to scan, even to the remotest *nebulæ*! Yet all this spatial vastness is but a feeble image of *God's infinity*. And so, too, the immeasurability in time of cosmic evolution is but a faint image of *God's eternity*. To-day there impinges on your retina a ray of light from an immeasurably distant fixed star. Some hundreds of years ago (years, that is, of light), perhaps this ray shot forth from this star, and sped on ever since at a velocity of 186,000 miles per second, to bring us greetings from that far-off constellation,

which possibly is itself now no more. You have in this sidereal message the picture of a wedding—the wedding of the spatial image of God's immensity with the time-image of God's eternity.

For us day-flies it is hard to grasp how all time must needs be but a relative entity, even as all space is purely relative. Yet such it is ; both are mere relations. Absolute time no more exists than absolute space. For what we call space is but the expression of the mutual relations of two bodies in point of position and movement. And what we call time is but a succession of changes relatively to a something changeable and therefore also itself relative. This is *the timepiece of creatures*, be its measurement by lunar years, or solar years, or stellar years. The limitation of the human mind is thoroughly brought home to us by the relativity of all our standards of measurement for everything surrounding us and for everything concerning us. When we ponder God's immensity and God's eternity, then do we poor creatures feel our insignificance ; and not without good reason. Quite as small as our standard measures do the events of so-called world-history become for us, when we compare them with the infinitely greater events of cosmic history and cosmic evolution. In this our little world-history of mankind *one thing only* bears the stamp of greatness : the *history of our salvation*,

which brings us into effective union with God's eternity, so that once for all we may live for evermore in him and through him.

Looked at from the standpoint of God's eternity, mankind seems like a swarm of day-flies dancing on the surface of a boundless sea. The millions of years that may have elapsed since the earliest appearance of organic life on our earth are, in the geological sense, but *one second* between two eternities. The geogonic and astro-physical evolution of our earth, from the moment it was shot forth from the maternal sun-ball, to girate round it as planet, is but just *one hour* between two eternities. The historical development of our whole solar system, even if it lasted many thousand times as long again, nevertheless means but *one day* between two eternities.

And the entire evolution of the visible cosmos from the first proto-nebula to the last planet dashing back to its central fire, and to the last sun-ball that has cooled to dead-level temperature—even this, despite the billions of years of its time-periods, is but *one week* between two eternities—the creation week of the Hexæmeron.

And both these eternities are not two eternities, but only *one* eternity. And this one eternity is the *one eternal God*! Before him not only one thousand years of our tiny world-history are "as one day," but also the trillions of years of cosmic

history are as *a moment*, as one lightning-flash that disappeared the moment it flashed. Verily, *God alone* is "the eternal."

And this everlasting God *loves us*, loves even me, and that from eternity! And in him, and through him, I am destined to possess *life eternal* in "heaven." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii 16).

CHAPTER V

WHERE IS HEAVEN?

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for them that love him.”—ST. PAUL: 1 Cor. ii 9.

WHERE then exactly is heaven? Let us endeavour to determine its position on the heavenly sphere. We know from the Creed that there is somewhere a place called heaven. Thither Christ ascended; there, too, in the beatific vision, God is eternally imparting himself to his elect. This is our belief, the faith we profess in “life everlasting,” when reciting the *Credo*. And we hope to get there ourselves some day. But the whereabouts of this place—that, for us earthlings, remains a problem of superhuman astronomy.

When we wish to indicate the place where we picture to ourselves “yonder heaven,” we usually point upwards with the finger towards our starry firmament, the arching vault above our heads. But our antipodes, situated on the opposite point of our terrestrial sphere, do exactly the same as ourselves. They, too, with like intent, point

upwards towards their own astronomical firmament. And in so doing, if one considers the matter from our standpoint, they are pointing not upwards, but downwards, in exactly opposite direction to us. Which of the two is right? Ourselves or our antipodes? The question is one that, I dare say, will never be solved by any Areopagus of terrestrial geographers and astronomers. Hence it is impossible for us, by means of a terrestrial globe, to find our way about the longed-for heavenly sphere. Where "yonder heaven" is—the heaven in which we believe, on which we set our hope—this we shall never know before we are there. And then we shall no longer need a sextant to fix its astronomical position in cosmic space. To be there will be enough to satisfy for ever our curiosity about heaven's localization.

But now we are not yet in "yonder heaven." Whether we represent it to ourselves as quite near, or as millions of Sirius-distances away, all this is a matter of absolute indifference as regards *our spiritual intercourse* with "yonder heaven," as regards our converse with "our Father in heaven," or indeed with the angels and saints in heaven. For, as regards this supernatural intercourse, the question of distance becomes eliminated, thanks to our belief in God's immensity, "in whom we live and move and have our

being," and thanks also to the Communion of Saints.

Accordingly, it is waste of time for us to keep anxious look-out with the telescope on some part of cosmic space, where "yonder heaven" may perchance be found. There is something wiser and more important for us to do. What is this?

To look out for another heaven, which certainly is quite near, which costs little seeking. And what kind of heaven may this be? It is "*this heaven*," our "heaven on earth."

The *beatific vision*, whereby God plunges his elect in an ocean of bliss, turns "*yonder heaven*," the scene of our eternal home after life's pilgrimage on earth, into heaven—that is, into a *place of eternal bliss*. And this same beatific vision of God we can only enjoy in the "beyond" in "*yonder heaven*." But what makes "*yonder heaven*" into a *definite place* of eternal bliss—that is already ours here on earth in "*this heaven*"—*the most sacred humanity of Jesus Christ*.

Not till Christ, after his Resurrection, "ascended into heaven," did "*yonder heaven*," where the angels enjoy God's vision, acquire a corporeal central point, a "crystallization-centre," for the whole hierarchy of pure spirits. St John, our greatest expert in heavenly lore, has left us, in his Revelation, a masterful description of

"yonder heaven," in the picture of the heavenly Jerusalem, of that *Beata pacis visio* (blessed vision of peace). In this vision of heaven he saw as the central point of that everlasting city of God, *the throne of the Lamb*, the glorified victim *Jesus Christ*.

Now this same throne of the Lamb, this central point of "yonder heaven," we possess here below on earth in our midst. And not once only, but myriads of times, *in every tabernacle of the Catholic Church*, where dwells our divine Saviour under the Eucharistic species with his glorified humanity; where daily, on hundreds of thousands of altars, through the priest's hands, he offers up his Eucharistic sacrifice, an unbloody renewal of the blood-stained sacrifice of the cross; and where daily he becomes the Eucharistic spiritual food, in holy Communion, of millions of faithful. There we have the throne of the Lamb, the central point of "yonder heaven," *in our very midst*. Verily, in holy Communion we possess him in our very midst, within ourselves!

Such, then, is "this heaven," *our "heaven on earth."* Here below, before the Eucharistic throne of the Lamb, we are not only in heaven, but we may, as often as we like, even have heaven within us. Accordingly, as long as we have not yet reached "yonder heaven," we must pitch our tents and fix our heart's resting-place in "this

heaven." Then, after death, indeed in the very moment of death, we shall easily find the way to "yonder heaven." Then we simply "pass over" from "this" to "yonder" heaven. And who knows if both these heavens are not much nearer to each other than we surmise?

On their intimate connection we at any rate possess the following truths, vouched for by eternal Truth itself (John vi 53-59).

1. For those to whom "this heaven" is open there is no other way leading to "yonder heaven": "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves."

2. The way from "this" to "yonder" heaven is quite safe; nor can it fail us, since, by worthy reception of holy Communion, we receive the pledge of eternal bliss*: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

3. In "this heaven" and by means of "this heaven" already here below, we set up *our abode* in the central point of "yonder heaven," and "yonder heaven's" central point sets up *its abode in us*: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him."

* Holy Church prays: "O sacred banquet . . . in which is given us the pledge of future glory." On the connection betwixt the grace of perseverance and holy Communion see *infra*, Chapter IX.

4. Already here below in "this heaven" and through "this heaven" we are living *a heavenly life, the life of the divine Lamb itself*: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me."

What, then, is the answer to the question: "Where is heaven?" It rings out to us from the throne of the Lamb, summing up in a word these promises of Truth eternal: "*Where I am is heaven.*"

Then if, on our earthly pilgrimage, we feel homesick after "yonder heaven," let us betake ourselves to "this heaven." Our homesickness will there be assuaged. There our soul can melt in holy love and be transfused from "this" to "yonder" heaven: *Anima mea liquefacta est, ut locutus est dilectus* (my soul melted as the beloved spoke) (Cant. v 6).

CHAPTER VI

LARGE-SCALE WORLD-OUTLOOK ON A CHRISTIAN BASIS

"I believe in one God, creator of heaven and earth."

"IN him we live, and move, and have our being." From a deeper knowledge of this all-embracing, all-permeating truth, there arises a grand world-outlook for all Christian believers.

Little fishes, without number, are swimming about in the ocean: millions of individuals belonging to many thousands of species, and to genera, families, orders untold. And besides the little fishes, there are in the same ocean countless other animals of lower and higher degree: puny dwarfs and mighty giants. Yet one thing they have all in common, whether real fish, or cuttlefish, or whales: they all live in the ocean, of the ocean, and through the ocean. For all are born in the ocean, which supplies them with food and maintains them in life; so that they are wholly and entirely dependent on the ocean and "adapted" to sea-life, in ways the most varied and manifold. From these laws of adaptation

none can withdraw—not even the flying-fishes, which by means of their fins dart forth from the water and flutter over the waves. Even these must straightway go back to the ocean to which they are irresistibly drawn.

Here is a weak comparison illustrating the *grades of creatures* that are all living in the ocean, and by the ocean, and through the ocean of Godhead.

This gradation starts in the realm of Nature, beginning with the smallest particles of cosmic dust, the tiniest atoms and still tinier electrons of matter, and their lesser and greater combinations. The largest of these, under the proud title of celestial bodies, are rushing round in cosmic space; and in the eyes of us little earthlings, who are fashioned of less dust, they are most imposing, though themselves also merely dust.

And in manifold variety of organized forms this same dust is raised to *life* and *sensation*. Hence arises the vast kingdom of the *vegetable world* from tiniest bacteria to mightiest mammoth trees. And, again, the great kingdom of the *animal world*, from the puniest uni-cellular amœbæ and coccidia to the stalwart lion and gigantic dinosaur. And these, too, are all sprung from dust, and “into dust return.”

Lastly comes the king of creation, *Man*. And

he likewise is fashioned out of dust and likewise into dust returns. Yet he is not wholly of dust, and therefore does not wholly into dust return. For with him begins a higher realm, the realm of spirit. Man constitutes a kingdom unto himself, placed midway betwixt the corporeal and spiritual kingdoms, combining both into one nature. Then above man is raised the realm of "pure spirits," greater and more glorious than all the celestial bodies, ascending through nine angelic choirs to the giants in intelligence and will we call archangels. Yet even the archangel Michael is and remains none the less a puny fish in the ocean of Godhead.

There we have three kingdoms of the *natural order*: Corporeal-world, spirit-world, and midway man combining both. But above this natural order there exists a higher, immeasurably higher realm: the realm of the *supernatural*, of grace and glory, whereby rational creatures are elevated *to participation in the divine nature*. This supernatural realm has its base in grace, its summit in glory, that is, in the beatific vision of the divine essence itself.

And hence we come to see the wonderful drama, wherein, though in our bodies akin to dust, we are nevertheless enrolled to fill the gaps made in angelic choirs by the haughty revolt of pure spirits against God. Lucifer and his

associates had, in their pride, rebelled in order to become "like unto God." Michael, leader of the heavenly hosts that remained loyal to God, had by divine power shattered them, his battle-cry echoing through all the heavens: "Who is like unto God!" This was a contest of spirits, more dreadful, more convulsing to the universe, than all the battles ever fought on earth. And with the speed of thought it was fought: "like lightning flashing from the clouds, thus did I behold Satan hurled from heaven." Michael had conquered the dragon and his adherents—"the place of the fallen spirits was no longer found in heaven." We earth burghers are destined to take their places, each according to the measure of our faith, our hope and love of God here below in this mortal body.

To climb up to the angelic choirs of its own strength lay beyond the power of poor feeble mankind, once it had, through Satan's jealousy, itself fallen into original sin, inherited of Adam. And here it is we behold a still more wonderful spectacle. The almighty and all-merciful God himself came to our rescue: the second divine Person was made man through the Virgin Mary. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." And by the strength of God incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ, we too shall be lifted up to God.

Thus arose two new kingdoms of grace and glory, through the Incarnation of the divine Word. Two *creatures, fashioned out of dust*, are now raised immeasurably high above the highest summits of angelic choirs.

The blessed Virgin Mary, mother of God, in whose virginal womb the divine Word took our human nature, is the most exalted of mere creatures, and therefore also queen of angels. And then, immeasurably high above her, at her side, yes, but towering Sirius-distances beyond, appears *the incarnate God, Jesus Christ*, in whom human and divine nature are united in one divine Person.

Verily unspeakable is the nobility conferred on us; unspeakably happy are we earth-born children of men, in that *the divine Word, the second Person of the Deity, became dust out of love for us, to raise our earth-dust to his level, even unto participation in his divine nature.*

CHAPTER VII

A PROFESSION OF FAITH AND OF LOVE

"I believe in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord."

OUR participation in Christ's divine nature is effected by sanctifying grace merited for us on the cross by the death of our divine Saviour. Hell's power over us was broken; from "Satan's slaves" we are become "children of God." Now the gift or increase of sanctifying grace is imparted to us by the *sacraments*. These were instituted by Christ, and bequeathed to us through the Catholic Church, the institute of salvation founded by him. But the progress and perfection of this participation in the divine nature rests on our co-operation with grace in *adhering to Christ*, who for us has become "the way, the truth, and the life." By adhering to his teaching and example we attain to likeness with the sacred humanity of Christ, which, though in the order of creatures, is the most perfect image of God, most pleasing to "the Father in heaven." Thus we are raised to *likeness with God*, to likeness with him who, in

virtue of his divine Person and nature, is the substantial image of the Father, "the splendour of his glory" (Heb. i 3). And hence by our following of Christ we become "supermen" in the noblest sense of that word. "Supermanhood" of any other kind is but folly and deceit.

Of the seven sacraments that bestow or increase sanctifying grace, greatest and most sublime is the most adorable sacrament of the altar. Through it the very fountain of all grace takes possession of our hearts, bountifully to grant mercy. With a view to our supernatural strengthening in the following of Christ, our relatively feeble human strength needed divine food—"the bread of angels." For to fallen human nature the following of Christ is arduous, painful, and wearisome; it is indeed the way of the cross, already trodden by Christ. Wherefore our incarnate God has continued to dwell here on earth in our midst, beneath the Eucharistic species, formed of dust, *so as ever to be present with us*, even in his sacred humanity, "unto the end of time"; to be *our daily sacrifice* unto the glorification of the divine Majesty; to be *our daily food* unto eternal life in holy Communion.

This graciousness on God's part towards us worms of earth, even to angels is incomprehensible! They can only wonder in adoration at the condescension of him who, for our sake, has

hidden himself beneath the veil of earthly dust in the holy Eucharist.

With the whole strength of our faith *to believe* in him there, is to bestow great honour on the divine Majesty. By this belief we humbly subdue our pride of understanding before the divine wisdom. But in this our faith there is likewise seismic force capable of hurling quite a mountain of modern unbelief into the ocean of divine mercy. Faith as tiny as a grain of mustard-seed—eternal Truth itself assures us—can move mountains!

Thence do we draw hope and courage—courage that leads to victory—in our contest against the kingdom of unbelief and godlessness established by Satan. Strong in this faith, it behoves us to rescue poor human souls so as to lead them back to their Lord and God.

Still further consider our *love* for him who for love of us became dust, and who still dwells in our midst under the appearance of dust! How great is our bliss just here! How great our power! A bliss that angels might envy us, if one may so express it in human speech! For it is not they, but we, who are privileged to receive into our hearts, at holy Communion, our incarnate God! And yet further, a privilege we possess over the angels in heaven is that we, not they, can repay in kind the crucified love of that God who out of love of us suffered death on the cross.

Our requital is the spirit of sacrifice in suffering; it is love's return in love crucified. And then the strength we draw from this sacrament of love! Strength a millionfold mightier than all the might of hell together! For is it not the power of the divine heart of Jesus himself? The might of the almighty love of him who became man out of love for us, and who under the Eucharistic species by means of his sacred flesh and blood continues strengthening us unto eternal life!

Wherefore I count myself happy to pay homage to this God also on behalf of haughty modern natural science, and to bring him my meed of adoration on behalf of all who know him not, and my love on behalf of all who love him not—nay, mayhap, fancy they hate him, because they do not even know him. Happy I count myself in that my wretched corporeal condition, the dependence of my spiritual soul on the senses of a material body, forces me into close corporeal proximity with our Eucharistic God, there, *on behalf of us all*, to seek him and to find him.

Gladly do I avow that, despite the scientifically unassailable faith I foster, staunch as a rock, in the omnipresence of the infinite God, whose majesty fills heaven and earth and permeates us through and through, nevertheless, as a corporeal being endowed with a human heart, I can only

be perfectly happy, in so far as happiness is here below possible, *in the closest proximity of my God in the most adorable sacrament of the altar, of him who became man out of love for me.* For "love's longing demands presence"!

Such is my profession of faith, such my profession of love to our Eucharistic Saviour.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR RELATION TO THE GOD-MAN JESUS CHRIST

"I am the light of the world : he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."—JOHN viii 12.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."—JOHN xiv 6.

"I and the Father are *one*,"—JOHN x 30.

GOD'S immensity knows no spatial limits, no local distances. It is wholly everywhere and everywhere wholly active: in it "we live, and move, and have our being."

Is, then, *Christ's Godhead*, with its omnipresent majesty and its absolutely infinite loveliness, not yet enough for us children of men? And do we not still longingly sigh for the presence of *his most sacred humanity*? Nay, is not this dissatisfaction not only a right but a duty for us also? And did not the Saviour for this very reason choose to abide among us under the Eucharistic species? If this be so, its cause lies in the weakness of the mental powers of our human soul, tethered as it is to a material body. And it was precisely to obviate this weakness

that our blessed Saviour instituted the adorable sacrament of the altar. Fortunate, then, for us has been that weakness!

A weakness nevertheless it remains. We little fishes, in the ocean of Godhead, do not quite know, neither can we know here below, what this ocean really is in which we are swimming, and which permeates us through and through. Did we but possess perfect knowledge of Christ's Godhead, we should, in an immeasurably higher degree, eminently, as theologians say, rediscover in it all the prerogatives of Christ's most sacred humanity and infinitely more. For, being a creature, the sacred humanity is finite, and consequently, despite its immeasurably great perfection, it still remains infinitely beneath the absolute perfection of the divine nature.

In Christ both natures, human and divine, are united without intermixture in the one divine Person of the Word. According to the Athanasian Creed, Christ is at once perfect God and perfect man, *true God and true man*. Hence, in the Gospel, our Saviour himself styles himself the "Son of Man." Again as "Son of man" he describes himself to us as our "way to the Father" (John xiv 6). But in his Godhead he is not our "way," but our "*goal*" and "*last end*": "I and the Father are one" (John x 30).

Now we poor children of men, throughout this mortal life of ours, are still on the way, not yet arrived at our journey's goal. We are not yet in our home "beyond," not yet in "yonder heaven," where, by means of the beatific vision, we shall gaze on the divine Essence "face to face"; where also, because of this beatific vision of God, we shall be transformed into the divine glory. Wherefore we may and must, while here below, with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might, cling to that God who out of love for us *became man*, and especially to the human nature of his divine Person which turns towards us.

It was precisely for this that he assumed our human nature. By his personal union (*unio hypostatica*) with the second Person of the triune God, and because of the consequent interchange of attributes (*communicatio idiomatum*), the man Jesus Christ is at once verily *true God of true God*, and shares in all divine qualities (attributes) of the Person of the divine Word. And for this reason he becomes, with his human body, human heart, and human soul, the object of adoration due to God (*latria*). And this is the theological foundation of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Thus Jesus Christ, true God and true man, even here below, is already "*our God and our*

all." And, likewise, we must not think that "above there," in the blissful eternity of "yonder heaven," in the beatific vision of his Godhead, we should hold Christ's sacred humanity in less esteem. Such a thought would be foolish, of the earth earthy, and short-sighted. *There* at length we shall understand these two unassuming words *unio hypostatica* (hypostatic union), the personal union of Christ's human nature with the divine. And as this understanding will *there* be ours for the first time, *there*, too, for the first time, the God-man Jesus Christ will be, and will continue for ever to be in the full sense of the word, *our God and our all*.

Perfect understanding, *comprehensive* grasp of the mystery of the hypostatic union, will not be our privilege, even in a happy eternity. For this we should need to comprehend fully and exhaustively the triune personality of the divine Essence, the inmost depths of the divine nature. For it is none other than *the second divine Person* who has for our sake assumed our human nature.

To such a flight of intelligence not even the blessed cherubim may soar, however near they be to the throne of God. And as none of the heavenly cherubim can fathom the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation, neither can any of the seraphim, all aglow with divine love, relish

adequately the fullness of God's love latent in these mysteries. It would be as though a little fish in the great world-ocean might drink in the ocean itself. Wholly immersed, happily immersed it may be in the immense depths of that ocean; but to fathom it and drink it up—that it can never do!

Completely to explore the abysmal infinity of God's being, completely to grasp his inexhaustible loveliness—of this *God himself* is alone capable. Alone “the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. ii 10). God alone fully comprehends the intrinsic mystery of the most holy and adorable Trinity: how from all eternity *the Father* is the unbegotten plenitude of being; how *the Son* is the substantial image of this plenitude, begotten from all eternity—the eternal Father's personal self-knowledge; and how the *Holy Ghost* is the eternal substantial spiration of both Father and Son—the personal mutual love of these two divine beings, who, different in person, are but one in nature, one with each other and with their mutual love.

But we need not worry if even throughout an eternity of bliss the mystery of the incarnation of the divine Word remains for us an inexhaustible object of our understanding and love. On the contrary, the special object of our eternal happiness is the infinite God. Were it possible for a

creature wholly to conceive and fully to comprehend his divine being, then God would cease to be the infinite; he would cease to be God. He would no longer be: *Our God and our all.*

CHAPTER IX

HOW CHRIST DWELLS IN US AND WE IN HIM

“He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him.”—JOHN vi 57.

“LOVE'S longing demands presence.” The saying is but that of a poet; yet few sayings are so true. Ever since the second divine Person became man out of love for us, and took to himself a human heart, this imperative “demand” of God's love towards us holds not only after a manner divine, but after a manner that is also human. Thus Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, wishes to be and to remain among us in his human presence—among us whom he loved unto death and even beyond death. And he wills actually to be and to remain in our midst with his human presence. In the tabernacle, under the Eucharistic species, Christ's most sacred humanity abides *among* us. *Within* us we possess it in holy Communion. But does it also *abide* in us? Rather is it not our heavenly Bridegroom's will to depart from us, as soon as his corporeal presence within us has ceased with the disappearance of the sacramental

species? Certainly not. Even then his wish is to abide not only among us, but within us also; and it is our duty to abide not only near him but in him. For has he not himself declared: "Whoso eats my flesh and drinks my blood, he abides in me and I in him"? But how is this beautiful promise fulfilled? How does he perform it?

Our lasting union with the Eucharistic Saviour is based above all else on *the omnipresence of his Godhead*. *One and the same divine Person* he assuredly is: infinite and omnipresent Word and man Jesus Christ. And in this sense St Hilary explains the passage from St John. Christ's omnipresence constitutes the basis of all other explanations as to how Christ in holy Communion abides in us and we in him.

A more direct answer to this question is usually forthcoming in the statement: *Christ abides in us by grace and we in him by love*. But what is the full meaning really underlying these words? And is this the whole answer to that burning question?

The manner of performance of Christ's promise is properly speaking his affair, not ours. We may rest content with the fact that his fulfilment is as sure as his promise. The "how" is the secret of his royal heart: here on earth we can only surmise, we may not fathom it. Were we,

with our feeble powers of understanding, capable of unravelling it, there would be no great mystery, no great secret of the King of Glory, which he will disclose to us only when we "are transformed into him" by our happy glorification in "yonder heaven." Nevertheless in "this heaven," here on earth, in his Eucharistic proximity, he will vouchsafe to us just a glance into this mystery, so as to spur us to fulfil more eagerly the condition attached to his pledge, so full of promise: "He that eateth my body and drinketh my blood, abides in me and I in him"

What does this glance enable us to surmise?

His particular and enduring *divine presence* in our soul through sanctifying grace. By it our heart becomes the "temple of the Holy Ghost," yea, the very temple of the most august Trinity: "We will come and make our abode with him" (John xiv 23). This special divine indwelling of Christ, who as second person of the Blessed Trinity is *one* with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is, thanks to the holy Eucharist, ever more and more strengthened, increased, deepened, elevated and glorified. Through it we retain the invaluable "pledge of future glorification." The relationship here established betwixt God and the soul is indissoluble and eternal—certainly so on the part of God's grace, which, of

course, always demands our free co-operation as well.*

The precise effect of frequent holy Communion is to give us the humble hope that divine mercy will bountifully bestow on us those graces with which it foresees we shall co-operate and so secure eternal life.

Further, with Christ's special divine presence in our soul, his divine efficacy is steadily enhanced to an immeasurable and inconceivable degree. For even in his presence by grace he remains purest indefatigable activity, the *actus purus*. Hence our life passes ever more and more into his life, till with St Paul we can exclaim, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is no mere empty conjecture; it is guaranteed by God's own word to be the effect of holy Communion: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me" (John vi 57).

Is not this enough? Is there aught else one may surmise? It would seem so. For Christ,

* On this point see Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 13: "De perseverantiæ munere" (Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, tenth edition, n. 806) and the Canons on Justification (*ibid.*, nn. 826, 832). Accordingly final perseverance must be looked on, not as a *direct* but as an *indirect* effect of frequent Communion, inasmuch as by it the life of grace is increased and invigorated.

who by holy Communion dwells within us, has not merely a *divine* presence and a *divine* love. His is also a *human* presence, and *human* also is his love—the love of a human *heart*. This human love of Christ will also abide in us and we in it. But how does divine omnipotence fulfil love's craving for everlasting presence of the lover in the beloved and of the beloved in the lover?

The mode of the continued presence of Christ's sacred humanity in us we now proceed to establish.

This sacred humanity, like ourselves, has soul and body. Now we know that Christ's bodily presence in us ceases at the decomposition of the sacred species. But concerning the continuance of the spiritual presence of Christ's soul within us we can at least form some vague estimate.

In our human speech, the *corporeal heart* that beats within our breast is the *symbol* and at the same time *the manifestative organ* of love.* Being the central organ of our blood-circulation, all our psychic emotions draw it into active, even violent, sympathy by means of the *nervus vagus* and the sympathetic heart nerves. It is, so to say, the sundial or face of the clock on which to read the time of day in the love-life of our

* The *elicitive* organ of the affections is, physiologically, the brain, not the heart.

soul. This natural and physiological connection between psychic love and bodily heart-action is so intimate, so much in fact a matter of experience, that the two expressions, "I give you my love" and "I give you my heart" are perfectly identical in meaning.

Have we not here perchance a solution of the riddle how Christ *as man* by union of love in holy Communion "abides in us" and "we in him"?

Here we certainly have a solution. The incarnate God abides *in us* with *his love*, with *his* "heart," and we abide *in him* with *our love*, with *our* "heart."

In the mutual love of two human beings, love is not merely a lasting psychic bond betwixt both lovers; *it is also a lasting psychic mutual indwelling* of both these lovers. Seas and mountains may keep them apart, they forget not each other; they are "ever" thinking of each other; they hold each other "ever" dear in their "heart." All the psychico-spiritual powers are stirred to action by memory, by imagination, by feeling, as also the purely spiritual forces by will and understanding. Thus a whole battalion of expert engineers are sent ahead, and a bridge is constructed over all distance, right away from one heart to the other. This bridge is as long as the spatial distance between both hearts; it is

likewise so short, so evanescently short, that the *one* heart is constantly present in the *other*. And this mystical bridge continues standing as long as the fidelity of both hearts endures.

Now the most sacred and glorified soul of Jesus Christ has without doubt at its disposal more than a millionfold stronger powers, whether spiritual or of the sensuous and mental order, than our poor feeble soul. Accordingly, should it not have in its power to cast a *lasting love-knot*, an *abiding heart-tie*, over itself and us—a bond so long as to defy earthly distances, and so short and so firmly set as to draw our soul into the soul of Christ and the soul of Christ into our soul; in a word, *our heart into the heart of Jesus and Jesus' heart into our heart?*

This is not only possible but real. Thus does the divine Heart of Jesus abide in us and we in him.*

* The decree of the Council of Florence, *Pro Armenis* (Denzinger¹⁰, n. 698), notes as an effect of holy Communion the *Adunatio hominis ad Christum* (man's unification with Christ). On this Pohle (*Manual of Dogmatic Theol.* III², 290 f.), following Suarez, observes: "As special fruit of holy Communion one must designate not the *sacramental* but the *mystical union* with the incarnate God—that is, union by *actual love* which, *ex opere operato*, by physical contact with the sacred body of the Lord in theandric fashion is kindled to bright flame, nourished, and perfected." This spiritual-mystic union of love may be said to stand midway between the beatific vision and divine participation on earth through sanctifying grace.

Now that the love of Christ's sacred humanity for us has grown so exceedingly intense that in holy Communion he brings himself into bodily union with us, of so intimate and mysterious a kind—as the bridegroom of our heart!—is this, his longing heart's love for the human presence of the beloved, to come to a speedy end after ten or twenty minutes? Will this love so soon renounce and part from the beloved? Not so. It cannot do that; it does not do that. It is not so weak and powerless as our love. And because of the giant strength of his love towards us, our love towards him acquires like force. Else the mutual indwelling of both lovers would not rest on reciprocity; and this is, at all events, love's "fundamental, biogenetic law."

To further its abiding union of love with us the most hallowed soul of Christ has at its disposal not only *man's* highest powers of soul and heart, but, over and above this, it possesses *all God's wisdom and omnipotence*. For is it not the soul of the God-man, the human soul of the divine Word? Thus all divine wisdom and all divine omnipotence are at the service of our Saviour's human love for us, at the service, let us say, of *the divine heart of Jesus*.

Our question should no longer be: What is possible to this love? Rather should it be: What is impossible to Christ's love? And the

answer is, "Nothing." Let this thought be in our minds when we recite St Ignatius' favourite prayer: "*Anima Christi, sanctifica me!*" (Soul of Christ, sanctify me!) Let us beseech our heavenly Bridegroom to sanctify our soul by drawing ever tighter, ever indissolubly closer, the holy bond that binds his soul to ours.

* * * * *

In order that Christ may dwell in us and we in him, *co-operation* on our part with his grace is essential. This co-operation consists primarily in removal of hindrances that thwart the continuance of his sacred presence in our hearts. What are these hindrances?

Is it perchance our wretchedness? By no means. On the contrary, it is precisely our misery that moved him to wed our human nature in the Incarnation. He came to us to seek out our poverty and convert it into wealth. And in holy Communion also he comes to us to heal our misery. Misery, then, cannot be a hindrance to lasting union in love with him, if only we humbly disclose and trustfully confess it to him. Verily *all* our misery, all our misery of body and soul, all the misery of our fallen human nature—all this misery is the iron that attracted the magnet of divine mercy, and drew it down to us in the mysteries of the Incarnation and Re-

demption. To seek out and heal this misery he came down into the crib and ascended the cross. And even *to-day* this same iron of man's misery is still ever drawing the same magnet in the tabernacle, where he dwells among us beneath the Eucharistic species, now *as ever* drawing every day and every hour and every moment.

And the iron attracts the magnet no less than the magnet attracts the iron. Such is the physical law, not only in magnetism of the corporeal but also in that of the spirit world. The attraction is mutual; it is based on reciprocity. Yet the power of attraction varies in both. It is active in the magnet, which needs iron as a passive complement for its activity. While attracting ordinary iron the magnet transforms the arrangement of its minute particles (molecules), and it is this action that "attracts" the magnet to the iron. Hence the whole activity of attraction lies originally in the magnet, and it is communicated to the iron only by contact with the magnet. Then the iron itself acquires the magnetic power of drawing other pieces of iron in like fashion, just as the magnet did to it.

And so the whole mutual power of attraction of divine love and of our love belongs originally to the *divine magnet*, to God's eternal love: *in caritate perpetua dilexi te; ideo attraxi te miserans*: "in perpetual love have I loved thee; wherefore

of my mercy I have drawn thee to me" (Jer. xxxi 3). And this purely divine magnet, by personal union of the divine with the human nature in Christ, became a theandric magnet at the Incarnation. Such is the origin of what is *our love-magnet, the divine heart of Jesus.*

From this magnet, still dwelling in our midst to-day in the holy Eucharist, there goes forth all magnetic force at work for mankind's salvation, and our magnetic force, too, in this same work. We become, as it were, infected with his magnetism. And when in holy Communion this theandric magnet touches our hearts to the innermost, transforming them to its own image, then do we also obtain the magnetic power of drawing other hearts to him. Thus we become magnetic carriers of the attraction-force of the theandric magnet, *of the love of the divine heart of Jesus.*

But, it will be said, the deplorable misery of sin sets a barrier to divine magnetic attraction!

Properly speaking such is not the case, and rightly so. For our greatest misery, the misery that is most specifically ours, is sin. All natural misery is no misery at all, if compared to supernatural misery: alienation and rejection of God by sin. All our good originates from God and through God. Of ourselves and through ourselves we have only the wretchedness of sin. This is precisely the force of gravity in our poor

human iron. It drags us down to the abyss, but it also draws down from on high, and with irresistible force, the magnet of divine mercy. It was the wretchedness of sin that, at the Incarnation, "drew down from heaven to earth" the second divine Person. And so our greatest misery became likewise, in a certain sense, *our* greatest blessing, thanks to the Redemption. *O felix culpa!* A fortunate transgression!

Thus we may exclaim with the Church, if only of our free will we cling not to that misery in sinful obduracy. For the infinite sanctity of God must detest sin, and cast it away, as the negation of divine sanctity, into the abyss of hell. But to such as entertain heartfelt sorrow for sin, to them it is no hindrance to divine magnetic attraction; rather does it serve as attracting mass. Our heart has only not to offer rigid resistance to this force of attraction, but allow itself to be transmuted by it. The greater the mass of misery, the more powerful also, according to these laws of supernatural physics, is the force of attraction exercised by the mass on the theandric magnet, which draws all the more forcefully, provided our will be earnestly bent on betterment.

Wherefore let us foster *unlimited trust* in the merciful love of the divine heart of Jesus, unlimited trust both for ourselves and for all poor

sinner, however great be their record of misery. All this record will then become title-deeds of benediction. Neither let us forget those unfortunate souls who, in their estrangement from God, know not their Saviour. He knows them also, and all their misery, and he has said :

“They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick” (Matt. ix 12).

“The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke xix 10).

CHAPTER X

HOW CHRIST LIVES BY THE FATHER AND WE BY HIM

"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."—ST PAUL :
Gal. ii 20.

"As the living Father sent me and I live because of the
Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me."
—JOHN VI 57.

[Καθὼς ἀπέστειλέν με ὁ ζῶν πατήρ, καὶ ἐγὼ ζῶ διὰ τὸν πατέρα, καὶ
ὁ τρώγων με καὶ ἐκεῖνος ζήσκει δι' ἐμέ.]

LOVE'S MAGIC POWER.

LOVE is the greatest magician in heaven or
on earth. Almighty is its magic wand.
To the lover it furnishes wings to fly
over mountains and seas to the beloved, and in
spirit and heart to abide by him and in him.
Love produces psychic mutual indwelling on the
part of both lovers that knows no local distances.
Love spurns not only space limits but also those
of time. True love is to be everlasting—if only
it remain true.

This holds in right royal fashion of *Christ's love
for us and of our love for Christ*. He abides in us
and we in him in holy Communion. And this

union on earth of both lovers is but the prelude or foretaste of the eternal "celestial nuptials."

But this love can do more. Our magician is more marvellous still. For by the magic wand the lover is *transformed* into the beloved.

Already in the earthly love of two human beings it happens so. At least, so it is said. Do we not hear how all thought, feeling, and will of the beloved the lover makes his own? And thus it comes to be commonly said of both lovers, that they are become *one heart* and *one soul*. Then, too, it comes to pass that the lover lives only for the beloved, on account of the beloved, because of the beloved, and by the beloved. Thereby he becomes the spiritual likeness of the beloved, the *alter ego*, or "second self." The union effected betwixt two lovers by love's magic wand results thus *in internal transformation of lover into beloved*.

Some seven hundred years ago there lived here on earth a man of strange holiness. He called himself the poor man of Assisi. Out of love of Christ he had taken to himself holy poverty for bride. And his poor bride brought him for his love of Christ a most precious dowry, not merely the hundredfold of what he had abandoned, but the millionfold: *inmost transformation of the lover into the theandric love of his crucified Saviour*.

It was not merely a spiritual transformation of the lover St Francis into the beloved crucified Saviour. Not merely ; for, in this case, the lover became in body the very image of the beloved. A true copy of the five sacred wounds of the Crucified was imprinted on his body. This befell the saint on Monte Alverno on the feast of the exaltation of the Cross in the year 1224, brought about by the fiery embrace of a seraph, who appeared to him in the form of the Crucified. And the name of this seraph is *Amor transformans* (*Transforming love*).

Throughout his life St Francis' wounds bore witness to his brethren, from whom he was unable to conceal them, of the mysterious force of love's magic wand. But to the eyes of the world, what lay behind that magic wand remained a sealed book. And yet it was only that something mysterious within, which every Christian should know. It is the *theandric love* dwelling in the heart of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, that almighty love which in holy Communion would work in every Christian a like ineffable miracle : *the transformation of the lover into the beloved*.

It takes two to love. Hence mutual love works a double transformation, *that of the lover into the beloved and of the beloved into the lover*. And if one of these twain be greater, stronger and more

loving than the other, there ensues at first a transfiguration of the stronger lover into the weaker beloved. Then follows likewise the re-conversion of the weaker beloved into the stronger lover, and all this by love's same magic power. Thus we have to differentiate two stages in this wonderful metamorphosis :

I. How Christ's love for us transforms him into us.

II. How our love for Christ transforms us into him.

I. HOW GOD THROUGH CHRIST TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO US.

"In Bethlehem for me
A little child is born,
My choice, his own to be ;
Thereunto I have sworn :
His own, indeed, his very own to be."

Old Christmas Carol (Trans. F. W.).

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." At the Incarnation the second Person of the Blessed Trinity took our human nature, uniting it to himself in the *Hypostatic Union*. In that way God became man while remaining God.*

* At the Incarnation the divine nature did not change or merge into a human nature. Both natures, without intermixture, were united in one divine Person (without fusion, without division, without change.—Denzinger¹⁰, n. 288).

In virtue of the absolute perfection and absolute immutability of the divine nature, change of every kind is excluded.

By the intimate personal union of the divine Word with Christ's most sacred humanity, God not only assumed our human form, but also our real human nature. And he did so through the magic power of love: "drawn from the bosom of the Father to the Virgin's womb," the almighty and eternal God to the weak condition of a child. Hence the note of worshipful wonder

But God became not a whit less truly man because of the fact that the divine Word added a human nature to the divine nature which it possessed from all eternity. Further, by participating in the divine nature (2 Pet. i 4), of which grace and glory impart to us a share, we are, as it were, divinized. Nevertheless, even in this state, we retain for all eternity our own human nature substantially different from the divine nature. These observations should suffice to render impossible all misunderstanding of the statements made above.

Reliable ecclesiastical writers have already often drawn a parallel betwixt the mystery of the incarnation of the divine Son and that other mystery of our adoptive sonship of God, imparted to us through Christ. Already in the early Church the mystery of this mystic transformation attracted most eloquent admiration. Thus, among others, one finds *St Augustine* (Serm. 13, *de temp.*) declaring that "God became man in order that man might become God." *St Athanasius* (Or. 4 *contra Arian.*) states that "God, putting on our humanity, became man in order that by his flesh we might be divinized." And *St Peter Chrysologus* (Hom. 72) expresses his astonishment that "God should become man, man God, the Lord a servant, the servant son, and that betwixt Godhead and manhood such close and intimate relationship should be established in a manner so unspeakable" (see *Scheeben, Myst. d. Christent.*, 362 f.).

in the words of that old Christmas carol: *Altitude! quid hic jaces in tam vili stabulo? Qui creasti cæli faces, alges in praeseptio?*

“Why, Most Highest, art thou lying
In a manger poor and low?
Thou the fires of heav’n supplying
Come a stable’s cold to know?”

Thus hath love made the infinitely supreme God not only one like ourselves, but a real “son of man.” He willed also to be “like us in all things, sin excepted.” In all things—even in poverty, humiliation, suffering, and death. The immortal God willed, for our sake, to die on the cross, as the poorest, the most suffering, the most wretched of us poor suffering, miserable children of men. Indeed, he had come among us as the innocent lamb, “*the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.*” And he, who, as divine Person, was all-holy, and himself therefore incapable of sin, as victim on our behalf, took on himself for our sake *our* sins, the sins of the whole world, as though they were *his own*. Accordingly, for us his fellow men, he has tendered to the divine justice superabundant atonement, in order, by his precious blood, to purchase for us eternal happiness.

By his triumphant resurrection from the dead and his glorious ascension into heaven, the “Son of man,” our brother and very image, passed

"into the glory of the Father.' His glorified human nature "in heaven above" is none other than our human nature. As for us he became like unto us; as for us he became in his own blood a propitiatory sacrifice on the cross; so, too, for our sake did he also become the King of eternal glory (*rex æternæ gloriæ*).

Thus did God's love for us *transform, as it were, God into us*: first into a dear little child, then into a victim suffering and dying for our transgressions, lastly into the glorified Son of man who shall come on the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead. The transformation of God into us involves three principal stages: *the crib, the cross, the resurrection-garden*.

One stage, however, has so far been altogether forgotten, one, too, of such intimate homeliness: *the last supper*. This stage comes before the station of the cross. On the eve of his passion, in remembrance of this same bitter passion, and to make us sharers in its fruits, Christ left us himself in the Sacrament of the Altar; his own very self, as both sacrifice and food. As sacrifice, daily, in an unbloody manner, to renew in our midst, for ourselves and by our own hands, the blood-stained sacrifice of Calvary. As food, *in order to transform us into himself*, even as the Eucharistic species, by our partaking of his sacred body, become transformed into us. Oh, bread of

angels! Oh, transforming love! Even unto us also did that seraph appear!

Thus arises the transformation of the majestic, beautiful, mighty, infinite *lover* into the puny, weak, wretched *beloved*. It is wrought by the magic power of *God's almighty love for us*. And to this same magic power is also due *the transformation of the beloved into the lover*.

Here begins the second phase of that marvellous metamorphosis.

II. HOW WE THROUGH CHRIST ARE TRANSFORMED INTO GOD: A CHRIST-EQUATION.

"God's only-begotten Son, wishing us to participate in his Godhead, took to himself our human nature, that being himself made man he might make us gods."*—ST THOMAS AQUINAS, Opusc. 57.

How is miserable man "to transform himself" into God? Is not so gigantic an undertaking on our part an effort of despair? And such would it undoubtedly be, did we seek to achieve this task of our own strength. Achieve it, however, we can *by the power of Christ's love for us*; and above all by the power of his love for us *in the sacrament of his love*, inaugurated at the last supper. Wherefore we, too, may exclaim with St Paul: "I can do all things in him that strengthens me" (Phil. iv 13).

* Ut homines deos faceret factus homo.

Of this Christ himself has left us a solemn pledge in his own words: "*As the living Father has sent me and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me*" (John vi 57).

A bold statement, perhaps the boldest that ever fell from human lips! But one also of deepest meaning! For it came from the mouth of the incarnate Word. Foolhardy it were to wish to grasp its full meaning. Yet we must endeavour to get some faint notion of its contents, so that its fulfilment in us may be the more complete. This is no vain curiosity; for utterance was given to that saying that we may hear it; and not merely with the ears of the body. His grace will assist to some little understanding thereof.

In the first place, that statement contains his *formal promise*: "He that eateth me, he shall live because of me." The assurance is as plain as it is definite.

Secondly, the promise given is one of *exceeding great solemnity*. It is supported by an appeal from eternal Truth to the two supreme and most glorious mysteries of the Christian faith: to the procession of the eternal Son from the Father (mystery of the most Holy Trinity), and to the life of the Son through the Father (mystery of the personal union of Christ's sacred humanity with the eternal Word). It is only in a few

passages of the Gospel, and always on the most solemn occasions of his life, that the Son of man appeals to his mission from the Father and to his life through the Father. Accordingly, in the eyes of the Saviour, this promise must have been as solemn as it was earnest.

Thirdly, this mysterious saying of Christ contains a *comparison*: "*As the living Father sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me.*" This comparison may well be represented as a *Christ-equation*, in consonance with St Hilary's delightful words*: "The mystery of this perfect unity between Christ and us, the Apostle has taught us above when he said: As the living Father sent me and as I live by the Father, so, too, he that eateth my flesh shall live by me. Thus he lives by the Father, and in like manner shall we live by his flesh."

Obviously our expression "Christ-equation" has only a symbolic sense. To speak of mathematical identity as between Christ and us would be sheer nonsense. Nevertheless, the current form of a mathematical equation may serve to render more accessible to our minds the details of that *comparison* which Christ has drawn betwixt his life *through the Father* and our life *through him*. In this sense the comparison may be

* Homily in third nocturn of Wednesday in Holy Week in Roman Breviary (Hilar., *De Trin.* i 8).

propounded as an equation of superlatively high degree, immeasurably beyond anything known to higher mathematics. It is one whose calculation and solution can never be achieved on this earth by weak human understanding, inasmuch as reckoning has to be made not in natural, but in supernatural quantities of the highest order, and in the matter of the loftiest mysteries of Christian revelation.

In "heaven above," when our spirit is immersed in the beatific vision of God, and when the divine essence itself reveals itself to us, then only will the content of this marvellous Christ-equation become *clear* to us. Then, too, shall we gaze on and contemplate those two mysteries of God's Trinity, and of the personal union of Christ's human nature with the Godhead—*with* our understanding, of course, yet not *in* our own but in the divine understanding—that is, *in* the second divine Person, *in* the *Logos*. "In *thy* light shall we behold the light" (Ps. xxxv 10). Meanwhile our faith in the word of the incarnate Word must remain firm as a rock, and we must steadfastly hold that the *comparison* he has set forth is absolutely correct. Meanwhile, also, our hope must remain steadfast that his solemn promise contained in that comparison will be fulfilled by him in us. The promise made, it is *his* affair to keep towards us. We may, and

should, accept the word of honour of the *Divine Word*. It has infinitely more weight than all our pledges taken together. When, at holy Communion, we have fulfilled the first part of the condition he has laid down, we may rightfully appeal: "*Keep thy word of honour.*" Its second part it is for him to make good. In this his honour is involved. Accordingly, let our *practical solution* of the problem set forth in John vi 58 be done with the utmost confidence in holy Communion. Our *speculative* solution of the difficult equation involved may be quietly deferred till we reach "yonder heaven."

And yet already here on earth, where our knowledge from faith is but a remote presentiment about the divine mysteries—mere "knowledge in a riddle," according to the word of St Paul—we are none the less eager to penetrate ever so little the comparison made by Christ himself. For it contains the *realization of our transformation through Christ into God*, and this reduced, so to speak, to a mathematical formula by our Lord himself. Since this metamorphosis demands responsive love on our part, as a co-operative element with God's love of us, we have a right to strengthen this love within us. This we can do, if only we would consider, under the familiar form of an equation, the mysterious comparison put forward by Christ in the words quoted.

This Johannine comparison (John v 58) comprises two parts which one has to imagine separated by the mathematical sign of equality just before the particle "so." The first half of the equation thus formed again comprises two parts set forth in the two comparative clauses: "As the living Father sent me," and "As I live because of the Father." The second half on the other side of the sign of equality (*i.e.*, on the right-hand side of our equation) contains only one item: "So he that eateth me shall live because of me." Thus the first part of the first half of our equation has no corresponding item on the other side concerning ourselves, whereas the second part of this first half has.

And the reason is this. The first of the two clauses, that make up the first half of the equation, concerns Christ; and thereby constitutes an exclusively divine part—to wit, the procession of the eternal Word from the Father. Its second clause, on the contrary, is an exclusively theandric part—*i.e.*, Christ's life through the Father. In so far as this latter clause refers to Christ's Godhead, it is one with the first. In so far as it refers to Christ's sacred humanity, it differs from the first. We must therefore begin with this second portion affecting us, namely, the second clause of the comparison drawn by Christ: His life in the Father and ours in him; "As I live

because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he will live because of me" (John vi 58, Vulg.).

Translators, ancient and modern, have tried to do justice to the full import of the foregoing passage as found in the Greek original. Perhaps the resultant variety of their efforts only helps us to fathom the depth of meaning latent in those words. The parallel phrases in the Greek text are διὰ τὸν πατέρα and δι' ἐμέ. The Latin Vulgate renders *propter*, "on account of"; the English Revised Version gives "because of," which is as rigidly correct as it is grammatical. The Douai or Rheims Version chose "by." German versions render mostly by *durch*, i.e., "through," but also *um-willen*, "on account of," and in other ways. None of our modern equivalents seem to exhaust the full significance of the relation conveyed to Greek minds by that tiny particle διὰ. Owing no doubt to the fact that among English writers on Greek grammar the preposition *through* is, by a kind of convention, reserved for the rendering of διὰ with genitive, this latter English particle, as in the case before us, is eschewed in renderings of διὰ with accusative. The object is to differentiate the derivative relation of *instrumentality* inherent in διὰ with genitive, from the various relations of *dependence* conveyed by διὰ and accusative. Διὰ with accusative may be said to mark the relation of *dependence in general*. One has to rely on context to elicit the particular kind of dependence, be it agency, origin, motive, occasion, or purpose. All these different relations of dependence are potentially expressed by διὰ and accusative. Hence there is no need for surprise at the actual variety of renderings of this passage which we encounter in the various versions, whether in the same or in different languages. This very variety suggests a method of arriving at the full significance of St John's words, by means of some slight *expansion*, or, more properly speaking, by *intensive* translation. Even then one cannot claim to have exhausted the full meaning of this wonderful utterance of our Saviour. In adopting this expanded or rather intensive rendering, one can hardly be taxed

with doing violence to the original ; for the reinforcing prepositions can at any rate be regarded as derivative of "because of," which is placed first on the list. Our method possesses the further advantage of sparing us a difficult choice between rival formulæ, all expressive of modes of *dependence*, and each one patronized by one or other of existing versions. Thus it would seem that by the words recorded in St John, Christ meant to say : "As I live *because of*, *by* and *for* the Father, so will he that eateth me, live *because of* me, *by* me and *for* me."

Transmutation into a life maintained wholly *because of*, *by*, and *for* Christ—is not this a complete passage of the lover's life into that of the beloved ?

Let us, then, try to explore still further the content of that marvellous "Christ-equation," and let us watch its verification in the working of grace at holy Communion.

Within the compass of Christ's life as man, which is covered by the words "As I live through the Father," two periods are to be distinguished : (1) the *earthly* life of his *passive* or pain-enduring manhood till his death on the cross ; (2) the *heavenly* life of his *glorified* manhood, in yonder heaven "at the right hand of the Father," and also in "this heaven" under the sacramental species in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar.

Consequently our investigation of the *Christ-equation* must supply an answer to the following questions :

1. How did Christ *as man* live throughout his *earthly* life, because of, by, and for the Father ?

And how is our earthly life because of, by, and for Christ?

2. How does Christ *as man* live his *heavenly* life because of, by, and for the Father? And how do we live our heavenly life because of, by, and for Christ, both in "yonder heaven" and in "this heaven"?

Both these problems have reference to Christ's human life through the Father, which must find exact parallels in our human life through Christ in the effects of holy Communion.

Next arises a problem of still higher grade. And it has reference, not to the human but to the divine life of Christ, which is really one with his eternal procession from the Father. It may be worded thus:

3. How does Christ *as God* live because of, by, and for the Father? And how is the life we live because of, by, and for Christ *as God*, a participation of the divine life?

I. CHRIST'S HUMAN LIFE ON EARTH THROUGH THE FATHER AND OUR EARTHLY LIFE THROUGH CHRIST.

(a) *How Christ here below lived because of the Father, and how we here below live because of Christ.*

The creature lives because of the creator; and such was the relation between Christ's human life on earth and the life of the Father. Creation, or the imparting of being to the creature, is, in

God, identical with the continued maintenance or conservation of that creature. "Conservation is continued creation." On the creature which he has created and which he maintains in being, God also bestows activity by means of his all-conditioning co-operation, which we usually call the *divine concursus*. If this be the universal law for creatures from the tiniest ant or amœba upwards, it is likewise applicable in a most perfect degree to the highest and noblest of all creatures, the most sacred humanity of Christ. His humanity lived wholly and absolutely because of and through its maker.

Consequently the whole of Christ's life was *a life through the Father*. No one was so thoroughly conscious of this as was our incarnate God himself. For he, as no one else, knew the deep-seated and utter dependence in every way of his human nature on its Creator. "Of myself I can do nothing" (John v 30). Hence, also, he ascribes all the good he has and does to the Father: "The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works" (John xiv 10). Not only as regards his Godhead, in which as second Person of the Blessed Trinity he "lives through the Father," but also as regards his sacred humanity, he acknowledged the utter dependence on the Father of his whole being and action.

And we, too, as God's creatures, stand in similar relation to the Father. We, too, are and act wholly and entirely "because of the Father." Now Christ is not only true man, but also true God, and, as "only-begotten of the Father," substantially one with him. Hence, in consequence of the personal union of the sacred humanity with the second Person of the Godhead, it follows that we owe our being and life to Christ quite as much as to the "Father in heaven." For "through him"—that is, through the divine Word—"all things were made, and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John i 3). And above all in the supernatural life, being the vine, he is entirely the life-source of his vine-branches: "Without me you can do nothing" (John xv 5). Thus, even in our earthly life, we are already truly living *because of and through Christ* as God, even as Christ also lived as man in his earthly life *because of and through the Father*.

Christ's human life "through the Father," in its highest and noblest sense, is realized *in the hypostatic union of his sacred humanity with the second divine Person*. As the eternal Word, which from all eternity proceeds from the Father, lives because of the eternal Father; and as from all eternity the Father begets the divine Son, substantial image of his own absolute perfection;

so also did the God-man Jesus Christ live "through the Father" precisely because of his divine personality.

But what is the force of that little particle "so" in the second half of our equation—in the part, that is, which concerns us? Can we also live through Christ?

We can in a manner that constitutes some faint reflection of the divine Sonship. Sanctifying grace elevates our souls to an adoptive sonship, to a supernatural divine sonship in Christ. Now this adoptive divine sonship becomes ours through the Father's only-begotten Son, who became man and gave himself up for us. Sanctifying grace, which is bestowed and augmented by the sacraments, is, in the domain of the supernatural, the highest likeness of the natural divine Sonship of the eternal Son. Christ our Redeemer has, by his death, not only merited for us the sanctifying grace of the sacraments, but he also imparts that grace to us through the sacraments. And he does so in the most perfect manner in the sacrament of his love, in which the partaking of his most sacred body and blood becomes to us "a means to the end"—the means of our supernatural union with God's only-begotten Son himself.

Accordingly, even as the man Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, *lived because of the Father*, so

we too in a parallel plane, as it were, yet in the order of creatures, *live likewise the supernatural life of divine sonship because of and through Christ*. Here, too, we see the verification of that mysterious comparison set forth by Christ himself.

(b) *How Christ here below lived as man by the Father, and how we also live here below by him.*

Christ as man lived by the Father as from the primal source and ideal exemplar of his whole spiritual life. Owing to the personal union of the sacred humanity with the person of the divine Word, the beatific vision of God was his soul's birthright. This was the central sun of his whole spiritual life, filling it with heavenly light and the warmth of heavenly love. As he willed, for love of us, to be capable of suffering, to live a suffering, not a glorified life on earth, his divinity held back and restricted the full effects of that beatific vision on the sacred humanity. Thus in his human nature Christ could feel pain, and not only bodily pain the most awful during his martyrdom on the cross, but also the most poignant mental pain in his agony on the Mount of Olives, and in his dereliction on the cross. His will was to permit the flood of suffering to rage over all his faculties, whether of body or

soul. It was a miracle of love on the part of our divine Saviour towards us.

Is it possible for us also, in this body of ours, with its liability to suffering, to *live by Christ* as he lived by the Father?

The beatific vision whereby, already here below, Christ lived by the Father, is truly our allotted portion, but only in "yonder heaven." There, face to face with the Blessed Trinity, we shall, in the fullest truth, *live by Christ*, the divine Word, even as the eternal Word itself lives by the eternal Father. Christ, in virtue of his divinity, is assuredly one with the Father. And thus the divine Son, the second divine Person, is likewise object, source, and ocean of our eternal bliss even as are the Father and Holy Ghost. There, in the fullest sense, we are destined to live by the Son, as he lives by the Father—*there*, in the eternal bliss of "yonder heaven."

There, then, and not *here* we are illumined by the blissful sun of beatific vision. And till we get there, long, distant, and weary is our road. How, then, may we also, in this our life on earth, live by Christ as he lived by the Father? The parallel drawn by Christ, can it be traced here too?

Yes, here too it may be traced in "this heaven!" In his Book of Revelation St John (Rev. ii 1) has left an extremely beautiful

description of how the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the abode of eternal bliss for the elect, is illumined by a sun, that is "the splendour of God" (*claritas Dei*), the blissful vision of the divine essence. But besides this there is in "yonder heaven," actually localized as its central point, yet another luminary, comparable to the moon's mild light, and radiating back in the sun's effulgence. This luminary is none other than the Lamb! *Lucerna ejus est Agnus*. Its lamp is the Lamb. Now the light that streams forth from Christ's glorified humanity in yonder heavenly Jerusalem is no cold or dead light, like that of our moon. Not only is it illuminating in its eternal brilliancy; it also sheds warmth on all privileged to gaze thereon in eternal blissful love. This benign love-star we also possess *here* on earth in "this heaven." The same throne of the Lamb which constitutes the central point of "yonder heaven," is set up *in our midst*, in countless tabernacles all over the earth's surface. *It is Christ's sacred humanity beneath the Eucharistic species*. The sight of it here is at once our substitute and our preparation for the beatific vision to come. In it, it is true, Christ's glorified humanity is hidden from the eyes of our body. Our eyes gaze only on the humble appearances of bread in the Host. But with the eyes of the spirit, with the eyes of faith and love, the

Christian believer is here gazing on Christ himself, precisely as he is, true God and true man. And the more the eye of faith is absorbed in this vision, the more also does it see; and the more intense, too, becomes the warmth of the Christian soul, till it is set on fire with love. There it is that we find *him* our only light and our only joy, our only consolation, our only strength, our only love, our only glory—God for love of us become man, our Jesus, our Saviour, and our all!

And when, in holy Communion, this "heaven on earth" is within us corporeally, when the throne of the Lamb is set up within our hearts, then may we almost forget our loss in that we are still pilgrims in this vale of tears, not yet possessors of the heavenly kingdom beyond. For already here below we possess within us the object of our eternal bliss, and this suffices for our temporal happiness here.

Yet this happiness of ours is not quite unalloyed. Our capacity for suffering out of love for Christ and for Christ's sake is intensified amid this felicity, and is fortified even to death on the cross. But the tears we shed in "this heaven" are not the bitter tears of grief, but love's sweet tears. Here below both grief and bliss have their tears. But where overwhelming grief petrifies and ceases to bring tears, highest

bliss has still its tears, else our poor heart would break for stress of love.

Whoso has in practice verified this problem, which Christ put forward here, knows its absolute correctness. Already here below we are able, thanks to the effects of holy Communion, *to live by Christ, as Christ lived by the Father.*

(c) *How Christ as man lived here below for the Father, and how we live for him.*

In Christ our human nature, from the first moment of its existence, owing to the personal union with the second divine Person, became the appropriated human nature of the divine Word. Hence the divine personality of the Word lived in Christ, as in us lives our human personality. In that word "personality" we embrace and, as it were, focus into a point the whole life of one's own self or *ego*, with all its thought, feeling, and effort of which our *ego* is bearer. We conceive of it as *a life for a something definite*, that constitutes the purpose or goal of our whole being and of our whole activity.

But what was this something definite towards which the personality of Christ was to gravitate? Its gravitation is to the Father; wholly and entirely to the Father. Christ's personality is identical with that of the eternal Word, pro-

ceeding from the Father, and with eternal love returning to him through the Holy Ghost. Hence the whole life of Christ in his sacred humanity was *a life wholly and entirely for the Father, a life of love to the Father.*

Is it possible for us also so *to live for Christ*? The answer is in the affirmative. With due regard to the difference betwixt our human personality and the divine personality of Christ, the parallel we found to hold elsewhere prevails here, too, and in a wonderfully perfect manner.

By the bond of faith, hope, and charity we are enabled to link up our whole personality with that of Christ; nay, we can, as it were, *surrender and transfer* to Christ our personality by love of him. All rights accruing to us through our human personality we voluntarily surrender out of love for him. And this may be accomplished either by the religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, or by any other complete surrender of our *ego*. We can put *him* in the place of ourselves as final goal of all our willing and doing. Then do we live in truth and in deed not *for ourselves*, but *for him*. Then does our whole personality "pass into the personality of Christ."

But the golden forge in which the melting, recasting, and stamping of our personality into that of Christ are thoroughly accomplished, is once again holy Communion, our sacramental

union here on earth with the God-man, Jesus Christ.

A commonplace individual becomes elevated, refined, ennobled by contact with a higher and nobler personality. How much more truly may this be asserted of that most intimate contact with the personality of God incarnate, such as takes place in holy Communion! Here we not only gain contact, but are wholly permeated by this divine personality, even as is iron by fire. Hence arises that *mystical union* of our personality with that of Christ—some faint image at least of the *personal union* of Christ's sacred humanity with the eternal Word.

Christ, as divine Person here on earth, not only lived wholly for the Father, but he exerted the activity of his whole life for the Father, with all the faculties of his human nature. In a word, Christ lived "for the Father," in that he directed all his thoughts and endeavours, all his willing and doing, to the glorification of his heavenly Father. At his life's end he could truthfully say, "I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John xvii 4).

We, too, can here below, to some extent, so *live for Christ* by the gracious efficacy of holy Communion. It was in his human activity that Christ declared: "I seek not my own glory, but

the glory of the Father who sent me." And we can likewise say: "Not my own honour is my quest, but the honour of my divine Saviour." And as Christ came into this world in all things to do the will of his heavenly Father, so we, too, can ever strive in all things to fulfil his most holy will, the will of our incarnate God made manifest to us in those words: "Learn of me that I am meek and humble of heart." "He that will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me." This we can do by the power of him who, in holy Communion, unites himself to us, imparting to us his own vital strength, as does the vine to the branches (compare John xv 5).

And when, on this our way of the cross, our road also lies through Olivet's dark night, when our heart shrivels in its agony in peril of death; fortified by this same sacramental grace, we too can breathe our prayer: "Lord, not my will but thine be done!" Our ransom from everlasting death he once achieved by his triple repetition to his heavenly Father, in the Garden of Olives at Gethsemane, of that same significant prayer: "Father, not my will but thine be done." Thereby he subjected his human will to the awful death sentence which God's justice and our sins pronounced against him. He accepted that sentence for his heavenly Father's honour and for our

salvation. And we can likewise willingly accept, when our turn comes, our death sentence, unto his honour, out of love for him and for the souls for whom he died. For his will is undoubtedly the salvific will of the incarnate God, in absolute conformity with the divine will, and towards us infinitely beneficent. Therefore let us requite the Saviour's loving words, uttered for us in the Garden of Olives to the Father, and uttered for our sake; and let us lovingly re-echo that self-same prayer: "Lord, not my will but thine be done!"

From Olivet the divine Son was led on by his heavenly Father's will to the gibbet on Golgotha. And our Saviour's will leads us on by the same way of the cross *to participation in the Redeemer's death for mankind*. Here, too, we can *live for Christ* even to our last breath, even as he lived here on earth for his heavenly Father. For we can in spirit unite our suffering and death with his. This is the keystone of our life *for him* here on earth, as it was the keystone of his passive life on earth *for the Father*.

* * * * *

Our parallel betwixt *Christ's life* because of, by, and for the Father, and *our own life* because of, by, and for Christ, ends here so far as life on earth is concerned. Our Christ-equation has received a practical solution, and that in the portion pre-

senting greatest difficulty to us. The other parts of this equation cancel one another without remainder—in celestial life.

Before venturing to get an insight into that side of the issue, one would like to look back and see how it has so far fared with our *wonderful metamorphosis of love*, whereby we retransform ourselves into Christ as he transformed himself into us.

To live *for* the beloved, to live *by* the beloved, to live *because* of the beloved—is not this actual *transformation of the lover into the beloved*? When on this earth two children of men so love each other that there ensues a psychical transmutation of the one being into the other, they are then said to become “one heart and one soul.” The lover has been transmuted so as to become the second self (*alter ego*) of the beloved and *vice versa*. Thus we too can and ought to become “a second Christ,” by transformation into Christ through love, by the help of his grace and by his powerful love. How does this come to pass?

Human nature, as such, we already share in common with Christ. At his incarnation he assumed, as is known, our human nature. Hence on our side retransformation is unnecessary. The first stage of Christ's transformation into us—the stage or station we called *the crib*—automatically finds its counterpart at the

birth of each and every Christian child. For this the child at holy Baptism is admitted to participate in the divine nature of the Son of God.

It is otherwise on the way from crib to *cross*. Christ as man became altogether like unto us, sin excepted, in order to rid us of sin and sin's punishment. Wherefore for three-and-thirty years he willed to pray for us continually to his heavenly Father. He also willed to devote himself to indefatigable labour, first in the hidden life of Nazareth, and then throughout his public life, as preacher of the new Messianic Kingdom. For this same end, lastly, it was his will to shed his blood on the cross and die an ignominious death.

And if we would transform ourselves into Christ, we too must become like him by a life of prayer and toil and suffering. *And the more like him we become in this, the more perfect also shall be our transformation into him.*

Above all, sin, which is the negation of the divine essence, must be rooted out of our hearts—original sin by Baptism; personal sins by the sacrament of penance and by contrition. And in this way the more free from sins we become, the more also are we transformed into the very image of *Jesus Christ*, holiest of the holy.

Now this our transformation into Christ has not only its negative side, aversion from sin; it

has also a positive side : imitation of the example in virtue and holiness which he left us, and by which he wished to become for us the way to the Father. And the loftiest pattern of heroic virtue left us by Christ is his passion and death. Thereby he became the innocent victim for our sins. Hence the highest earthly stage of our retransformation into Christ is the station of Calvary, where God, become man for our sake, completed his transformation into us with our human birthright of suffering. Whatever lies beyond this stage pertains not to this earth. *In our imitation of Christ here below our climbing is upward to the Crucified, not beyond.*

Thus our assimilation to Christ, our transformation into Christ, reaches its zenith on this earth *in the life of sacrifice on behalf of sinful mankind out of love for him.* The souls of all men for whom he became man, for whom he died on the cross, are immeasurably dear to his divine heart. For all these souls his precious blood was shed ; and for those that know him not and love him not, there is risk of his blood being shed in vain. How, then, can we give better proof of our responsive love to him, than by making ourselves an oblation on the sacrificial altar of the love of his Sacred Heart, on behalf of them who are his brothers and sisters no less than ours ? It was he who said : " Inasmuch as ye did it unto

the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me" (Matt. xxv 40). Love for Christ, transforming us into Christ, transforms us also into a sacrifice of his love for these souls.

Here we have the loftiest and most beautiful fulfilment of our Saviour's valedictory injunction: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another even as I have loved you" (John xv 12). *The ardent love of God and neighbour*, that glowed in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, must be kindled in our hearts also. Then with the Apostle Paul we may truly say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii 20).

When this fire of divine love has consumed this mortal frame of ours, only then do we arrive at the last and happiest stage of our retransformation into Christ: *our transfiguration into the glorified God-man of the resurrection garden.*

A new phase opens up here for the solution of our momentous Christ-equation: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eats me, he shall live because of me."

Hitherto in our presentation of Christ's sacred humanity we made use of the imperfect tense: As Christ on earth *lived* by the Father, so shall we, too, in our earthly life, live by him in holy Communion. By his death and resurrection he overcame all that is earthly and transient:

"Christ rising from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him" (Rom. vi 9). He now lives everlastingly because of the Father, by the Father, and for the Father. Even as regards us, instead of "we lived," it is henceforth "we live *now and for ever* because of Christ, by Christ, and for Christ."

Thus we approach the *second* of the three sublime problems referred to above (p. 80).

2. CHRIST'S HEAVENLY LIFE AS MAN BECAUSE OF,
BY, AND FOR THE FATHER, AND OUR HEAVENLY
LIFE BECAUSE OF, BY, AND FOR CHRIST.

The higher we climb in the first part of our Christ-equation, the more we are at a loss how to discuss in human speech a topic so exalted, but the more also does joyous hope prompt us to surmise.

(a) *About Heaven Above.*

At the resurrection Christ's sacred humanity rose glorified from the dead and ascended into heaven, where "evermore he is seated at the right hand of the Father," the King of everlasting glory. The beatific vision of God resembles a sea that bursts all sluices and containing dams; it overflows all faculties of soul and body in the glorified Saviour. The sacred wounds he retains as the triumphant token of his victory—

which is ours also—over death and hell. No more pain is caused by these wounds; they are, as it were, a living prayer for our salvation to the Father, before whom he is our advocate. They are become sweet wounds inflicted on him by his love for us. And they radiate forth in glorious brilliancy for him and for us unto all eternity.

Such is our blessed Lord's *glorified humanity* in "*yonder heaven*." It remains for us to examine how the comparison sketched by himself applies to that quarter. And here, too, we meet with a happy solution. For as Christ has risen from the dead, so shall we, too, rise from the dead, as the Apostle of the Gentiles teaches (1 Cor. xv 13-28). And we shall be made like him, as we were like him in his passion. By his theandric omnipotence "he will fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. iii 21). For unto us hath Christ declared: "I am the resurrection and the life" (John xi 25). "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi 55).

Long before the general resurrection our souls will have been immersed in the ocean of divine light and divine love. Meantime, all earthly remains of our body may have been decomposed in the grave into their ultimate atomic

combinations and scattered to the winds in the vicissitudes of cosmic life. Yet one day it will participate in that blessedness, and it, too, *will be glorified*. And then that same blissfulness shall stream through all the veins and pores of its being. Already in this life the spirit of man, by its beauty, can beautify and, as it were, transfigure its wretched partner, the body; for the life of soul and body is one. And the more exalted the relationship of the spiritual life with God, the more exalted is the spiritualization and clarification of bodily life also, so that the glorification of the body in celestial existence need hardly be looked upon as miraculous. Here below the whole man has suffered for Christ; wherefore in heaven above the whole man must likewise be happy in Christ. *Our heavenly life in "yonder heaven" becomes altogether transformed into the heavenly life of our incarnate God, Jesus Christ.* "We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii 18). And as Christ in his heavenly glory lives wholly through the Father because of the participation of his sacred humanity in the divine life of the eternal Word, so, in that heavenly abode, we too shall live through him and by him and for him; and we too shall for ever share his divine

life through the Father, by the Father, and for the Father. Such shall be our transformation into the celestial Christ in "yonder heaven."

(b) *About "This Heaven."*

Here below we are not yet in "yonder heaven," but we can already find firm footing in "this heaven." Here, indeed, we find Christ's glorified humanity with its *heavenly life*. And already here it is given to us to partake—as far as is possible for us in mortal body—in this heavenly life of the God-man. Our transformation into the heavenly Christ is wrought *by holy Communion*.

So far the process of our re-transformation into Christ during our earthly life reveals two stages: *crib* and *cross*. But in that metamorphosis of love, whereby God incarnate transformed himself into us, there were two further stages: the supper-room and the garden of the resurrection. In that garden Christ's sacred humanity entered on its heavenly life in "yonder heaven." Accordingly this station corresponds with our transformation into Christ glorified in "yonder heaven." The other station, the supper-room, coincides with our transformation into Christ already glorified in "this heaven."

In the supper-room, on the eve of his passion, Christ instituted the sacrament of his love, in

which and by which the risen and glorious Saviour is now living in "this heaven," even as he is living in "yonder heaven." It is true he lies hidden beneath the humble Eucharistic species, yet in this condition he is none the less *the same glorified Saviour with his divine and human nature here as there.*

And here as there he lives one and the same life, that unique, immortal theandric life; *the life of the divine victim* (cf. Apoc. v 6). Here, at holy Mass, the celestial Christ offers himself to the eternal Father, as our sacrificial offering for the salvation of all mankind. And as our sacrificial food the heavenly Christ daily finds entrance into our mortal body, "to nourish us unto life everlasting." *This is the heavenly life of the theandric victim in the blessed Eucharist*, that life which here on earth he continues to live on even to the end of time, because of the Father, by the Father, and for the Father.

In this heavenly life of Christ we have a share through holy Communion. By our union with him we live this heavenly life with him. For herein he becomes our sacrifice and sacrificial food. And the more intimately and perfectly the life of self-immolation for his sake actuates our community of life with the heavenly victim, the more effectually also do we transform ourselves into the heavenly Christ in "this heaven."

His sacred body, which we receive in holy Communion, is no longer liable to suffer. But our body, which here below in holy Communion becomes united to his, is still subject to the law of suffering. Happily so for us! For in this way, as members of holy Church—that is, of Christ's mystical body—we can continue the life of suffering of the Lamb of God. And we do so by *our* life of suffering out of love for him and for those souls for whom we make oblation of ourselves to him. Seeing that holy Church is none other than Christ himself living on continuously, we are enabled, as St Paul tells us, "to fill up that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ" (Col. i 24). No doubt the infinite merits of his death on the cross are immeasurably more than sufficient for the redemption of thousands upon thousands of sinful worlds. Nevertheless, he desires his work as Redeemer to be gradually carried out in his mystical body by our vital participation therein. He desires us also to apply the fruits of the work of redemption to all mankind through the instrumentality of the members of his body vitally united to him. This is why the priests of his Church administer the sacraments to all in order to distribute the effects of redemption. This is why all Christ-loving souls are praying, working, and suffering for the eternal happiness of their fellow men in order to

bring to them the graces of salvation, even as the blood-stream runs through all veins of the same body, driven by the force of the heart, by the force of love. Thus the more intimately do we live the incarnate victim's heavenly life in the blessed Eucharist, and the more generously we requite Christ's crucified love for us and for all men by our crucified counter-love of him and of souls so dear to him, the more powerfully also are we realizing the sacrifice of Christ's death for all mankind.

A most instructive practical lesson follows. The supper-room for us is just as near to the last station of the cross, as Mount Sion was for Christ to Calvary. From the supper-room he went straight to his bitter passion before going to heaven. And for us likewise the happiness we enjoy in "this heaven" in the blessed Eucharist is but the viaticum for the way of the cross, and a source of strength for the crucifixion. Only from the cross is the way open for us also to "*yonder* heaven" through the blessed might of "*this* heaven."

Such also is our *heavenly* life through the heavenly Christ in "*this* heaven," here on earth. Thus by this same magic power of love, which transforms God through Christ into us, we too shall become, already here below, re-transformed into the heavenly Christ. As Christ in his

heavenly life in "this heaven" lives because of, by, and for the Father, so do we also in our "heavenly life on earth" live by Christ, for Christ, and because of Christ.

And when the choirs of blessed spirits in "yonder heaven" "lie prostrate in adoration before the throne of the Lamb," and when they intone their eternal hymn of praise, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive . . . honour and glory and blessing" (Rev. v 12), we kneel likewise here below before the throne of the Lamb, and intone that same heavenly hymn.

Let us now take a further step forward in the solution of the sublimest of all equations, our *Christ-equation*. We now approach its first part: the divine life of Christ.

3. CHRIST'S DIVINE LIFE BECAUSE OF, BY, AND FOR THE FATHER, AND OUR DIVINE LIFE BECAUSE OF, BY, AND FOR CHRIST AS GOD.

"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, whatever things God prepared for them that love him."—1 COR. ii 9.

Those words pertain not to *this* but to *yonder* heaven. We must, notwithstanding, strive to penetrate somewhat deeper into that heavenly life which Christ leads through the Father, in the hope of getting some faint glimmer of how we

also shall live, *through him*, our heavenly life in "yonder heaven."

The divine life lived by Christ as second Person of the Blessed Trinity and only-begotten Son of the eternal Father, is "of to-day." It has no "yesterday" and no "morrow," no beginning and no end. It is the *eternal now*. "Thou art my Son; *to-day* have I begotten thee." The eternal Son is thus addressed by his eternal Father from eternity to eternity (Ps. ii 7).

It is indeed the life eternal of the divine Word in the bosom of the Blessed Trinity. It is of him St John says: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John i 1). This divine life of the eternal Word constitutes the mystery of the Blessed Trinity itself, as everlastingly old and everlastingly young as is God's triune essence itself. By the substantial knowledge of his innate divine perfection, the eternal Father begets from all eternity his eternal Son, the consubstantial image of his beauty, the "Logos"; and these two divine Persons, essentially one in nature, embrace each other in eternal love, through the third divine Person, the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from both throughout all eternity.

Herein consists the eternal life of the divine Word through the Father. And participation in this *his* eternal life will one day be *our* eternal life

also in the beatific vision of God, in "yonder heaven." On the eve of his passion, he himself prayed to the Father for us that we "may all *be one*, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us." And again: "I made known unto them thy name . . . that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii 21-26). This closest unity of life and love between us and Christ and the Father is the most perfect and noblest fulfilment of that divine promise: "As I live because of the Father, so will he that eateth me live also because of me."

The divine Word, the divine Son, is the substantial image of the Father. The whole creation and each individual creature can be pleasing to the eternal Father only in so far as they resemble his only-begotten Son. Consequently imitation of Christ, assimilation to Christ, transformation into Christ, become even for us the way to render us God-like, to raise us to "participation in the divine nature"—in fine, the way towards the "Father." And when our earthly life has been transformed, in that metamorphosis of love, into the life of Christ, that glorious final act, in the wondrous work of divine love, will not then be wanting; then indeed will our heavenly life in the beatific vision of "yonder heaven" become for us participation of the *divine life* of the

eternal Word. *Then shall we in deed and in truth, through Jesus Christ our incarnate God, live conjointly his divine life, even as he, in virtue of his divine personality, lives eternally through the Father.*

THE HEAVENLY BRIDAL SONG.

Let us glance back on the solution of our mysterious problem, the Christ-equation: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me" (John v 57).

Corresponding to the word "As the living Father sent me," there occurs in the second half of the equation no explicit parallel that concerns us. For that, as we pointed out, was a purely divine item, the eternal procession of the Son from the Father. But as this eternal procession of Christ from the Father is really identical with Christ's divine life through the Father, by living conjointly the life divine of the eternal Word in "yonder heaven," *we are also conjointly living his procession from the Father.* And herewith the whole Christ-equation is solved. By participating in Christ's divine life in the beatific vision, we are living conjointly with him the inmost eternal life of the one and triune God.

So let us there return to the Father through Christ in the love eternal of the Holy Ghost. In due correspondence with the three principal

stages of *God's transformation into us* through love—incarnation, redemption, resurrection—let us retransform ourselves into God *through Christ*: into the suffering Christ on earth, into the risen celestial Christ, and into the divine Christ of eternal bliss.

This is the supreme consummation of our sharing in the divine nature (2 Peter i 4). Already here below its preparation proceeds within us—like the flower forming itself in the swelling bud—through the mighty force of the heavenly Christ's love in his sacrament of love. *Here* begins now our most intimate union with his sacred humanity; here we effect, as it were, a transformation of ourselves into him in holy Communion. His sacred humanity is nevertheless for us only "the way to the Father." And similarly, our union with and transformation by love into Christ's most sacred humanity is for us but the way to most intimate union with and transformation into his Godhead. *Per Christum hominem ad Christum Deum*, "through the man Christ to the God Christ," as St Augustin so beautifully puts it (Tract. in Joan. xiii 4). Here in "this heaven" we become wholly permeated by that "transforming love." The magic wand of the almighty love of our incarnate God transforms us *into himself*. In that way the partaking of Christ's sacred body in holy Communion

becomes a prelude and foretaste of the heavenly nuptials—the nuptials of the Lamb who in “yonder heaven” weds us evermore to his Godhead.

In such wise do we transform ourselves *through Christ into God*. Thus we realize the truth of his words when he said: “As the living Father sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me.”

The whole beautiful Christ-equation thus solves itself perfectly. And it is happily solved in the unending bliss of “yonder heaven.” But the final solution of this sublimest of problems finds its preparatory and practical anticipation here in “this heaven,” in holy Communion, the best school of the mathematics of love. Let us diligently frequent this school and banish all shyness to learn. Then our turn too will come to have a part in the *nuptials of the Lamb*. We are all invited and we must accept the invitation. Then at last that heavenly wedding song shall ring out for us also. Compared to it all our earthly nuptial songs are but dull funeral marches.

That heavenly bridal song St John, the beloved disciple, learnt while listening, and in his Revelation he gave it to us. It is sung by countless radiant choirs of angels. Its poetry is the harmony of the spheres, and it is accompanied

by the most enrapturing angelic music, though it knows no material sound vibrations. For ever and ever this song resounds :

Hail to our God and to the Lamb !
Blessed be they who came out of great tribulation,
And washed their garments white,
In the blood of the Lamb !
Blessed !

For the Lamb shall lead them
To the fountains of the water of life.
And God shall quench their thirst
In the flood of his delight.
Blessed !

Their youth they shall renew,
Like that of the eagle.
Like lilies they shall bloom
Before the Lord !
Blessed !

And on their heads
Are golden crowns ;
And in their hands,
Palms of victory !
Blessed !

And the Lamb shall feed the victors
With hidden manna ;
And to them he shall give
A new name !
Blessed !

And in the tree of life
Their strength shall be,
And over them the Lord shall rule
For evermore !
Blessed !

To our God and to the Lamb all hail!

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Blessed, blessed, blessed!

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

After the mighty lover hath wholly transformed himself into the puny beloved, and after the latter has been by love re-transformed into the former, then we find a ready solution to the question, "Where is heaven?" Heaven is wherever this intimate union of both lovers is going on. This union begins in *this* heaven; in *yonder* heaven it is consummated. Heaven, therefore, is wherever the mighty lover becomes altogether *one* with his puny beloved. In other words, "Heaven is where I am." This answer rings out from the throne of the Lamb both in *this* and in *yonder* heaven.

Herewith emerges a felicitous solution to the further question: How does the divine Saviour *abide* in us after his Eucharistic presence has ceased within us? To the query, "How does Christ abide in us and we in him?" (John vi 57), reply was made from the verse immediately following in St John (vi 58): "Christ in holy Communion *lives* in us and we in him." If we live by Christ and for Christ and through Christ, as he lives by the Father, for the Father, and through the Father, *then we also live in him*

as he lives in the Father. The abode problem is solved by the life problem. Since both lovers live in each other, each exists in the other, and each abides by the other, as long as their mutual love endures.

A certain communicant at the conclusion of his thanksgiving became perplexed over the question, "Is our Saviour still within me or has he gone?" From his own heart he received the unmistakable reply: "Thou must not ask, 'Lord, art thou still there?' but thou shouldst inquire only, 'Lord, do I still love thee?' *For by our mutual love we live but one life—my life. I am thy life.*"

CONCLUSION

THE STRUGGLE FOR GLORIFICATION THROUGH- OUT ALL NATURE, AND ITS ATTAINMENT

"And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying: Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion for ever and ever."—REV. v 13.

TWO little fishes, a thousand miles apart, swimming about in the same ocean of Godhead! Such was the starting-point of these meditations. Later, we saw how that ocean contains many more millions of little fishes of the greatest possible variety—on earth, throughout the cosmos, and in heaven—and how the same infinite ocean streams round and through them all. And all these little fishes form, as it were, a magnificent scale or ladder of creatures. The greatest and most beautiful and most precious little fish in this divine world-ocean is, as we saw, *the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ.*

Despite its immeasurably great perfection,

despite its immeasurably great superiority over all other created beings, it is, nevertheless, but a little fish in the ocean of Godhead. It is true it belongs to an order quite unique and of highest degree, because with the ocean of Godhead it is united *to one Person* in the divine Word. Yet betwixt Christ's human nature and his divine nature essential disparity always exists and ever remains. The former is a created thing; the latter the Creator himself, the absolute Being (*Ens absolutum*).

Now mark how through Christ this infinite distance betwixt creature and Creator is bridged, not only as regards Christ's sacred humanity, but as regards the whole creation, which, as St Paul (Rom. viii 22) beautifully puts it, sighs and groans for redemption.

One of our great poets has given poetical colouring to this thought of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

“Through all the veins of Nature flowing
E'en far as silent stars are glowing,
Hear universal wailing rise !
In loving, trembling expectation,
Athirst for glorious transformation,
Each creature wrestling wistful sighs.”

FREDERICK SCHLEGEL (Trans. by F. W.).

A deep truth underlies these poetic words. In man inorganic matter is raised to vegetable and sensitive life. Man combines in himself the

whole lower creation—the inorganic, vegetable, and animal worlds—forming thereof *one nature*. He is a microcosm, a whole world in miniature. But he is more than that. He has also a spiritual soul, united in one substance and nature with his body, which is fashioned of dust. The corporeal, the visible, and palpable is but his lesser half. His invisible and better half towers aloft in the spiritual world to which it belongs. In this way man becomes the link between the whole lower visible creation of the corporeal world and the invisible higher creation of the spiritual world. He is a microcosm embodying two worlds. The whole irrational creation below man is but the footprint of the divine perfections. Just as every created cause can only produce something like itself (*omne agens agit simile sibi*), so God, in creating, could only produce a masterpiece, bearing witness to the Master's hand, to his divine omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness. But this witness remained mute. A tongue was lacking to give it expression. The traces of divine perfections in irrational creation are like written characters legibly engraved thereon. But it is unable itself to read them. *To decipher* those characters, and in order *to give expression* to the witness for God's majesty that underlies the irrational creation, it was necessary that a being endowed with understanding should appear on

the scene. And here on earth this being is *man*.

He combines in the bodily halt of his human nature the whole visible creation, not only corporeally, but spiritually also. For he recognizes it and he groups his ideas so as to form thereof a complete picture, a general outlook on Nature. He contemplates individual members of this creation and their harmony all round him. He is led to think and reflect on it all. At night his eye is raised to the luminaries of the firmament. In the cosmic system and its development he divines God's infinity and God's eternity. The heavens proclaim the majesty of God.

In spring he sees about him the variegated beauty of blossom in field and garden. In that vegetable world he admires the prettiness and odour of flowers, and he takes a delight in them. And from the lilies of the field his spiritual glance ascends higher and higher to Him who clothed these children of earth more beautifully than Solomon in all his glory.

And he sees around him the animal world, with all the various and multitudinous aspects of life. Here he sees everything living, developing, feeling, struggling for life ever longer and ever more joyous, under the impulse of the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction. And beyond these vital functions of life in the animal

world, his spiritual eye perceives a higher beneficent hand—the hand of “the Father in heaven,” who giveth food to the young ravens, and without whose will neither sparrow falls to earth nor a hair from man’s head. And when he considers how even the life history of a tiny ant-guest* is made up of a thousand apparently fortuitous concurrences, which a higher wisdom and goodness harmoniously directs to its welfare, then, indeed, does man look up with ever firmer trust to his Father in heaven, in the conviction that for them that love God everything turns for the best. Since, if the Lord condescends to guide the destiny of irrational creatures, much more will he direct the destiny of man, on whose spiritual soul his own image is stamped!

The deeper the human mind penetrates into Nature’s mysteries and its evolution, the higher does it rise, till man becomes the *prophet of that creation*, which with clear voice proclaims to him and his peers God’s greatness and might, and wisdom and goodness.

“All radiant beauty from Him springs,
The gorgeous lily of the dell,
The twinkling stars His glory tell,
Of Him the lark in heaven sings.

* Consult E. Wasmann’s *Die Gastpflege der Ameisen und ihre biologischen und Philosophischen Probleme* (234 Beitrag zur Kenntniss der Ameisengäste und Termitengäste). Berlin: Bornträger, 1920.

“The morning sun with gladsome rays
Shows forth creative power and might.
The glow-worm in the dark, still night
God’s father-love and care displays.”

(Trans. by J. M.)

This praise of God out of the mouth of man, “herald of the Deity,” as Linnæus called him (*Divini entis præco*), was meant to be a sacrifice of praise, offered by him to the Almighty in the name of all creation. But it was likewise intended to be a thank-offering on behalf of the whole visible universe. For it was an acknowledgement of his own dependence and the dependence of all creatures on God. And this profession was translated into action by man’s use of creatures in conformity with God’s will, to serve Him whom they had taught him to know. Thus man became *high priest* of all visible creation, and his heart the altar of sacrifice unto the divine Majesty.

This was man’s lofty calling as God had designed it. The crown of material creation, he was destined not only to rule over it as king, but also to be its spokesman and high priest. And in him and through his instrumentality all visible creation, which he incorporates in himself, from being a mute witness of divine splendour, was to become a sonorous song of praise to God’s wisdom and omnipotence, and a sweet odour of

sacrifice to his infinite goodness. Such was man's dignity! For was not his soul, because of its spiritual powers of intellect and will, fashioned after God's own image?

"After God's own image" man's immortal soul was certainly created. Higher still man was by grace raised unto *likeness with God*. And in "glory," promised him as the guerdon of victory, his very body, though fashioned of dust, was destined to be transfigured in life everlasting. *Such should have been the glorification of all visible creation in man and through man.*

But it came to pass otherwise. Man fell, lured into sin by envy of the fallen angel. And *through him* and *in him* fell also all visible creation, which he incorporates. Instead of rising upwards to glorification, it sank back into its original impotent dust. Wherefore in man and with man creation is now sighing for redemption from the curse of sin, amid the throes of its struggle for glorification.

But whence was redemption to come to man, and, in man and with man, to the whole visible creation also, whose king, spokesman, and high priest he once was? It came through Christ. Thanks to the exceeding great mercy of God, according to eternal plan, *the second divine Person became man*, in order to elevate to the Godhead, to the most exalted glorification, all mankind and

all creation with it. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." Jesus Christ, God and man, by his saving death, rescued the whole world from the curse of sin. In his glorious resurrection from the dead, the earth's dust rose out of the grave unto glorification. And as Christ rose from the dead, so shall we, too, one day rise from the dead unto the splendour of glorified and eternal life. Then will all Nature's longing after transfiguration be stilled, and stilled for ever.

But between creature and Creator, between the finite and the Infinite, still lies a wide abyss unbridged! How was this abyss *to be bridged*, so as to lead all visible creation *to union with God, to the likeness of God?*

Only a golden bridge of infinite span could bridge this abyss. And that bridge is at hand, and we call it *the personal or hypostatic union of Christ's most sacred humanity with the second Person of the Trinity*.

Now this golden bridge, by which the human nature in Christ is united to the divine, is not something lying midway between the two banks which it connects. It is really identical with one of these two banks; with the infinite divine nature of the eternal Word. For, of course, the bearer of the hypostatic union is Christ's personality itself, and this is *a divine Person*, the eternal

Word, the consubstantial splendour of the majesty of the Father. This golden bridge stretches, as it were, across from the infinite to the finite, so as to elevate and assume unto itself Christ's human nature. Not only is the infinite abyss that seemed to yawn betwixt the human and divine nature in Christ thus bridged, but it is utterly filled in, *and that* by the second Person of the Godhead himself. The infinite ocean of Godhead, in the incarnation of the divine Word, advanced, as it were, beyond its banks to embrace the tiny fish of human nature, and draw it in personal union into its eternal bosom.

Christ became man *for our sake*, to lead us to the Father. Therefore the golden bridge of the hypostatic union is *likewise for us* and at our disposal. *For us* it was *made passable*. The God who for us became incarnate leads us across this golden bridge by means of sacramental grace,* as also by the heroic example of his life and passion; yea, right across *to the Father*. There, awaiting us, and in us, awaiting all visible

* In his excellent work, *Das Jenseits*² (Paderborn, 1920, p. 344), Professor Jos. Zahn luminously discusses the question how in the sacraments of the Catholic Church earthly matter has a part in man's glorification, inasmuch as it is elevated so as to become the visible and effective sign of invisible sanctifying grace. This obtains in highest degree as regards the sacred Eucharistic species.

creation—"the whole world"—is blissful transfiguration in the beatific vision: *in rapturous immersion in the divine ocean of light and of love.*

"God is the light!" "God is the love!"

The last chord struck in these meditations rings forth in hopeful sighing after *eternal* glorification of "the whole world" *through the mediation of the God-man, Jesus Christ.*

Divine heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!

Jesus have mercy on me and on all for whom thy precious blood was shed on the Cross, and on all who are solemnly consecrated to thy Sacred Heart. Have mercy also on all those souls that are estranged from God, pining in the dark night of modern unbelief. Grant that they also may find *thee* again, and in thee their eternal life. Then together with them I shall praise thy mercies for ever.

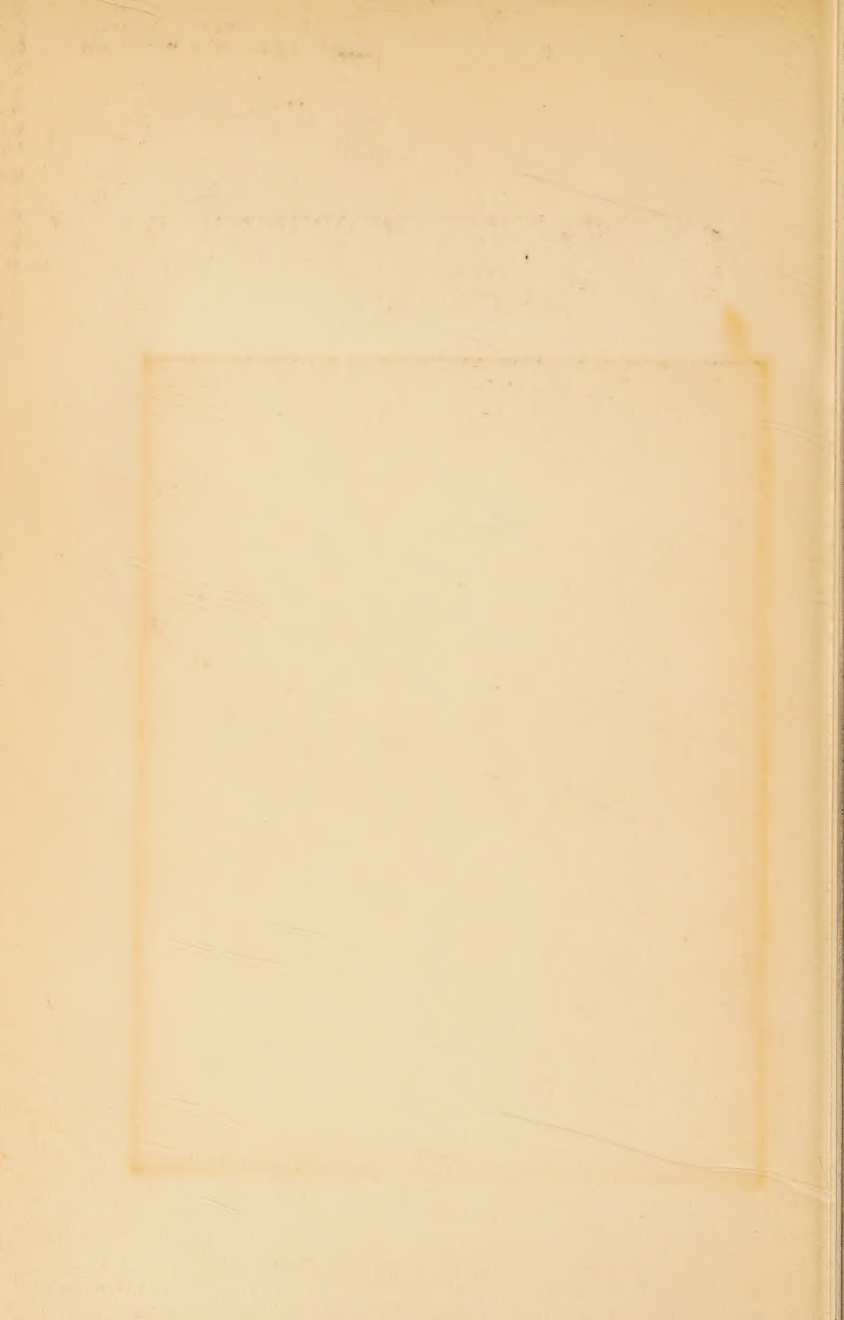
"Misericordias Domini in æternum cantabo!" (Ps. lxxxviii 2) (The mercies of the Lord I shall for ever sing).

"Deus misereatur nostri et benedicat nobis, illuminet vultum suum super nos et misereatur nostri!" (Ps. lxvi 2) (The Lord be merciful unto us and bless us, and shed the light of his countenance upon us, and have mercy on us!).

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